Presented to
The College of the Bible
by
W. T. Moore
Eustis, Florida

ENGLISH CHRISTENDOM

FROM 1800 TO 1850.

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

FROM

1800 TO 1850.

A History,

WITH A POSTSCRIPT ON SUBSEQUENT EVENTS.

BY

JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

HAVING ventured during the last twenty years to publish volumes on the "History of Religion in England," from the opening of the Long Parliament to the close of the last century, I now attempt an addition to my task, by presenting to the public a record of events bearing on the same subject, down to the year 1850. To this I append a brief postscript touching what has occurred since.

Having, during a long life, been thrown into association with many persons who had much to do with the religious transactions of their day, and having enjoyed more or less friendship with distinguished persons amongst Episcopalians and Nonconformists, —whose memories I cherish with reverence and affection,—I have drawn upon my own personal recollections for several of the facts and illustrations included within the present work.

It has been my aim throughout to maintain the method and spirit of former historical volumes, and so to promote, by the blessing of God, the interests of Christian truth and catholic charity.

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CONTENTS OF VOL I.

INTRODUCTION . . . . . *page* xi

CHAPTER I.

POLITICAL RELATIONS.

The Irish Union, 1.—Previous Rebellion, 4.—Terms of Union, 5.—Irish Prelates, 6.—Threatened Invasion, 9.—Patriotic Sermons, 11.—Queen Anne's Bounty and Church Building, 13.—Licenses to Preach, and Lord Sidmouth's Bill, 14.—Relief from Oaths required by Toleration Laws, 23.—Colonial Laws and East India Charter, 24.—Wilberforce, H. Thornton, and W. Smith, 29.—Spiritual Peers, 33.

CHAPTER II.

POLITICAL RELATIONS (*continued*).

Persecution of French Protestants, 39.—Jubilee of George III., 41.—Death of Princess Charlotte, 42.—Death of Duke of Kent, 43.—Accession of George IV., and Trial of Queen Caroline, 44.—Bishops : Ryder, Marsh, 47 ; Kaye, 48 ; Coplestone, 49 ; Blomfield, the Sumners, 50.—Repeal of Test and Corporation Acts, 51.—Catholic Emancipation, 57.

CHAPTER III.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Dr. T. F. Middleton and Reginald Heber, 71.—Edward Stanley, 73.—A. W. Hare, 76.—W. F. Hook, 79.—Parr, 82.—Valpy and Arnold, 84.—Bampton Lecturers, 88.—Other Literary Clergymen, 96.—Preaching in the English Church, 101.—Christian Knowledge and Propagation Societies, 106.—Bishopric of Calcutta, 109.

CHAPTER IV.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH (continued).

The Evangelicals, 112.—Newton and Cecil, 114.—Thomas Scott, 117.—Robinson, 119.—Richmond and Simeon, 121.—S. Chase, 124.—D. Wilson, 125.—E. Bickersteth, 126.—Faber and Elliott, 129.—Study of Prophecy, 130.—Clapham Sect, 131.—Claudius Buchanan, 138.—Society for Missions to Africa and the East, 140.—Barley Wood and Hannah More, 147.

CHAPTER V.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH (continued).

Westminster Abbey, 150.—St. Paul's, 153.—St. George's Chapel, Windsor, 154.—Old Parish Churches, 155.—New Ecclesiastical Buildings, 157.—Clerical Characteristics, 160.

CHAPTER VI.

SIGNS OF WHAT WAS COMING.

Oxford University, 161.—Intellectual Unsettlement, 169.—John Keble, 170.—R. H. Froude, 171.—J. H. Newman, 172.—H. J. Rose, 176.—Cambridge University, 178.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW RELIGIOUS ENTERPRISES.

Religious Tract Society, 181.—British and Foreign Bible Society, 187.—Controversies, 195.—Sunday-school Union, 197.—Christian Evidence Society, 203.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRESBYTERIANS.

Arianism, 205.—Price and Rees, 207.—Lindsay, Evans, and Worthington, 209.—Socinianism, 210.—Dr. Priestley, 211.—Unitarianism, Lindsey and Belsham, 213.—Unitarian Societies 216.—Controversy, 221.—R. Aspland, 223.—English Presbyterianism in the Provinces, 225.—Scotch Presbyterianism in England, 229.

CHAPTER IX.

INDEPENDENTS.

The beginning of the Century, 233.—The Claytons, 237.—Dr. Collyer, 239.—Dr. Pye-Smith, 239.—Mr. Walford, 240.—Colleges in London and the Neighbourhood, 241.—Norwich, 242.—Leeds, and Colleges in Yorkshire, 243.—Independent Ministers in other parts of the Country, 247.—Divine Worship, 249.—Home Life, 251.—Foreign Missions, 253.—Morrison, 254.—John Williams, 255.—Congregational Literature, 259.

CHAPTER X.

BAPTISTS.

Andrew Fuller and John Martin, 262.—Robert Hall and Joseph Kinghorn, 265.—The Serampore Mission, 269.—Carey, 270.—Marshman and Ward, 273.—Death of Fuller, 277.—John Foster and John Sheppard, 278.—Baptist Societies, 280.—Dr. Rippon and Psalmody, 282.—General Baptists, 285.—Sandemanian Baptists, 288.—Seventh Day Baptists, 289.

CHAPTER XI.

CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

Spa Fields, Tottenham Court, and Tabernacle, 293.—Surrey Chapel and Rowland Hill, 294.—Orange Street, 296.—Union Chapel, Islington, 297.—Hackney Academy, 298.—William Huntingdon, 300.

CHAPTER XII.

WESLEYANS.

Deed of Declaration, 305.—Plan of Pacification, 306.—Revivals, 307.—Missions, 311.—Richard Watson and Jabez Bunting, 314.—Methodist Missionary Society, and—Persecution in West Indies, 318.—Controversies, 319.—Methodist Magazine, 322.—Joseph Benson, 323.—Adam Clarke, 324.—Richard Watson, 326.—Henry Moore, 328.—Samuel Bradburn, Robert Newton, 329.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW CONNEXION AND PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

Formation of the New Connexion, 333.—Principles, 335.—Bible Christians, 340.—Primitives: Founders Bourne and Clowes, 341.—Camp Meeting, 342.—Rules, 346.—Energy and Persecution, 347.—Methodist Chapels, 350.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

Quakers' Meeting, 353.—Consciousness of Decline, 355.—The Hicksite Heresy, 356.—Stephen Grellet, 358.—William Forster, 359.—Elizabeth Fry, 362.—Joseph Lancaster, 363.—John Dalton, 365.—William Allen, 366.—Quaker Home Life, 367.

CHAPTER XV.

MORAVIANS.

Institutes, 369.—The Latrobes, 371.—Missions, 371.

CHAPTER XVI.

IRVING AND THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

Edward Irving's Popularity, 374.—His Eloquence, 376.—Hatton Garden, 377.—His Missionary Sermon, 378.—Scotch Church, Regent's Square, 379.—The Manifestations, 380.——Irving's Doctrinal Peculiarities, 383.—Decline of His Popularity, 384.—Congregation in Newman Street, 385.—Constitution and Ceremonies of the Apostolic Church, 386.—Henry Drummond, 389.

INTRODUCTION.

THE first half of the present century has been unprecedented in the history of the world. The variety and complexity of events baffle those who undertake to write the annals of the period. Political, literary, and scientific interests—to say nothing of art in its manifold departments—intersect one another in lines so subtle as to puzzle the most quick-sighted observer. Acquisitions of various kinds have been applied to material uses; and only those who are old enough to remember our first steamboats, the kindling of gas-lights, the origin of railways, and the earlier modern employment of electricity, can understand the "leaps and bounds" made in the march of English civilization. To chronicle these marvels, tracing them to their source, and marking their gradual development, is a task of great difficulty, the more so because materials within our reach are so abundant.

Difficulties also encumber the path of the ecclesiastical student. "He cannot see the wood for the trees." What changes have taken place in the Church Establishment and in the organizations of

Dissent! Dignitaries on the one hand, Nonconformists on the other, are different people from what they were in 1801. Unanticipated forms of Anglo-Catholicism and rationalistic inquiry have appeared. Streams, not to say oceans, of religious books have been poured from the press. Piles of volumes are accumulated on Evidences, particularly as they regard the mutual relations of theology and science, and very much has been accomplished in Biblical Criticism. What a spur has been given to ecclesiastical inquiries of all kinds; what an amount of Missionary work has been done; and what efforts have been made for the education of the people!

In dealing with this enormous amount of material, in the first instance facts have to be settled; to begin with philosophy is a mistake. Not till after laboriously digging into the rough ground can any sound and graceful edifice be constructed; and when a wide collection of facts has been completed, there come toilsome inquiries into causes, consequences, and interrelations. Secrets of human consciousness, motives underlying conduct, the constitution of men's minds, and their individual peculiarities have to be sought after. Theological creeds in their origin and growth, in their resemblances and antagonisms, demand careful analysis and comparison. Modes of worship in their inward principles, as well as in their outward forms, must be measured and examined. Intellectual and moral causes are obvious factors; and after all, historical philosophy is miserably defec-

tive which does not recognise the Divine as well as the human in the story of the Church of Jesus Christ. If there be a Providence over the world, surely it should be taken into account when we are looking at spiritual affairs. If the holy Catholic Church be built on the foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, that incomparable fact must never be lost sight of.

Preliminary investigation requires more than the work of a mere annalist. Thoughtfulness must at once take in immediate causes and consequences, the difference between outward incidents and inner principles, and the advancement of germs into growths. And from beginning to end impartial judgment is indispensable. I do not mean by this, impartiality in looking at truth and falsehood, orthodoxy and error, good and evil. Certainly not. A Christian must take most earnestly the side of what he sees and feels to be right, he cannot be cold and indifferent as to what God has revealed, his warmest affections must be stirred by what makes for man's salvation; but in judging of individuals, it is a duty from first to last to hold the balance even, with a steady hand.

Students who would do justice on all sides must remember that there is such a thing as denominational bias, which is likely to influence the statement of opinions, and that such bias may inflect the direction in which the bowl is thrown. Remembering it, they will watch over their own preferences, and

guard against being influenced by personal prejudice. Fair and honest conclusions are quite possible when a man makes them his aim and endeavour; and it can practically be disproved that none but Churchmen can judge of Churchmen, and that none but Dissenters can judge of Dissenters.

Government by party seems a political necessity in the present condition of England; in like manner the maintenance of what are called "religious interests" appears to be dependent on the existence of sectional societies, each working out its own principles. As in the former, so in the latter case, prejudices created by party spirit become a serious bane, preventing a right solution of fundamental questions, and disturbing a righteous estimate of personal character. We are in much danger of not looking at objects in clear sunlight, of not seeing them as they really are: but of letting what is near and what we are fond of, hide parts of the distant landscape. We allow shifting shadows and flickering cross-lights to confuse our vision of what actually comes within the range of sight. We are unconsciously influenced by a regard for the reputation of our own Church, and so our opinions of many things are biased without our being aware of it. I wish to remember all this throughout these volumes; and before entering upon details, it may be well broadly to indicate the ecclesiastical systems at work when the present century opened.

The Episcopal Church claimed descent from the

Ante-Nicene communion, and appealed to the early Fathers and Councils as helps and guides to the interpretation of Holy Writ; not after the Roman Catholic method, but in imitation of Reformers who, whilst entertaining a reverence for patristic literature, professed to make the Scriptures the basis of their beliefs. The Church rejoiced in its Thirty-nine Articles, its collection of Homilies, and the Book of Common Prayer as the safeguard of orthodoxy and the wellspring of devotional feeling, but it was too much forgotten that in no ancient confessions, in no venerable documents can the life and power of a community be found; the life must be realized in spiritual consciousness, the power must be manifested in Christian activity. The Church had able advocates, learned critics and commentators, and systematic divines of depth and compass, down to the close of the eighteenth century. Identified with the universities, and possessing abundant sources of knowledge, it was guarded and fortified by an Act of Uniformity, which established Episcopalianism as a national institute, though a scanty toleration was conceded to those who had conscientious scruples preventing their adhesion.

Nominally it was one,—a society inclosed within bonds of ecclesiastical order, the members declaring their assent and consent to its articles, worship, and discipline, and closely interlaced by internal ties,—whilst the whole country, with its diocesan and parochial divisions, was placed under its care for

the Christian instruction and improvement of the people; but on close inspection it was seen to combine a variety of opinions, feelings, and practices. Not only were there differences of judgment, there were alienations of heart. The classifications of sentiment belonging to a later period, which I shall have to describe, did not then exist; but there were schools of thought already arising, and definite varieties were at the end of the last century brought into antagonism, such as did not exist at the beginning.

I do not concur in all the sweeping charges brought against the Church as time left it on the threshold of a new century, but there are certain points in respect to which a clear case may be made out. Ambition, craving after preferment; avarice, grasping at income; nepotism, providing for clerical relations on the part of those who had the command of patronage: these were evils common at the period, as the biographies of Churchmen represent, and as some of the most zealous supporters of the establishment at the present moment will allow.

Neglect of duty by the higher and lower dignitaries, and by incumbents and curates also, was a fact not to be denied. A bad reputation hung about the Church's neck, and it took a good while to slip it off. Indifference to clerical duty, spiritual inactivity, and the neglect of souls, entailed two consequences. First, the Church lost ground. It is a striking and conclusive fact that, whereas at the Revolution Church-

men were numbered as twenty-two, to one who had left the Church: the proportion eighty years ago is said to have been only eight to one. Secondly, the moral and religious condition of the country was deplorable. There is no need of adducing statistics of crime, descriptions of immorality, and evidences of irreligion,—abundantly furnished in support of a statement which can be made only with the greatest pain. Nor can it be said that the Establishment alone was responsible; there was much neglect on the part of the old Dissent, as I have shown elsewhere.[1]

I turn now to look at Nonconformity. It had begun to alter before the time when my narrative commences. It had changed considerably from what it was at the Revolution. Links indeed remained connecting it with Commonwealth times; traditions had not died out of Puritan adventures under Cromwell. There were people in 1800 old enough to have heard from their great-grandmothers, as they sat, listening under a patriarchal pear tree "to feeble voices, soon to be for ever silenced, how in the civil wars they had concealed brothers and sisters in a ditch from the rude assaults of Rupert's cavalry.[2] Better still, there remained some who had been told by their ancestors what sort of men Baxter and Howe were, and who knew many who had been familiar with Watts and

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[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi.

[2] *Men Worth Remembering*, p. 76: *Andrew Fuller*, by his son.

Doddridge. But circumstances had changed; noble and other aristocratic families, who were pillars of Dissent in 1700, had died out or had left the faith of their fathers. It is remarkable how titles disappear in Nonconformist histories as the years gather. Dissenters fell in rank as they rose in numbers; large landowners, wealthy merchants, were more common among them at the beginning than at the end of the eighteenth century.

The Presbyterians were first in point of worldly circumstances. Rich families of that class, only fewer in number, remained in Lancashire, also in the west, and eastern counties. Stories are told of carriages waiting in long lines on a Sunday morning at the doors of chapels in the neighbourhood of London. Members of congregations, in many parts, were distinguished by literary culture, scientific attainments, and artistic taste. Somewhat of ancient strictness might be found here and there; but conformity with the world was on the increase, and habits of amusement were allowed such as would have shocked the prejudices of an earlier age. Liberal political opinions were entertained; Toryism was stoutly opposed. The French Revolution had its advocates and its excusers. Liberty of conscience inspired enthusiasm; submission to human authority in matters of religion could not be tolerated: hence deviation from orthodoxy advanced in most quarters. A hundred years made a great difference; at the end, Presbyterian beliefs had grown so lax that they would not have

been recognised by the grandfathers who held them. How modern Unitarianism grew just about the time when this history commences will be seen in a following chapter.

Independents came next to Presbyterians in social position. They were very conservative, and had little sympathy with Presbyterians in their ideas of intellectual progress and free thought. They generally clung, with strong tenacity, to the evangelical beliefs and puritan traditions of other days. They, however, no less than Presbyterians, asserted the rights of conscience, and were jealous lest the management of internal Church affairs should suffer from foreign intrusion.

Baptists confined the ordinance from which they took their name to adult believers, and administered it by immersion, naturally insisting upon it as of great importance; for it was the basis of their denomination, the chief thing distinguishing it from some other bodies. They were as independent in their form of government as were those called after that name. Modes of admission to fellowship were of the strictest description; bonds of discipline were tightly drawn.

The Baptist principle presented itself in connexion with both Calvinistic and Arminian sentiments. This occasioned a twofold division, under the names of Particular and General Baptists; the former holding the Calvinistic doctrine of particular redemption, the latter the Arminian doctrine of universal redemption.

The extreme doctrines held by Particular Baptists made way chiefly amongst the humbler classes. Those of the denomination in superior circumstances were generally moderate; and persons of this order were numerous in several towns, especially in Cambridge; but in Cambridgeshire, the Fens, and the County of Northampton, Particular Baptists had a stronghold, and characteristic stories are told of some of the congregations.[1]

General Baptists were strong in the west of England and in some of the midland counties. In the former of these instances they resembled the Presbyterians, and adopted Unitarian views; in the latter their Arminianism was of a decidedly evangelical stamp.

Another distinction amongst Baptists related to the practice of communion. Strict communionists, as they were called, allowed those only who had been immersed to partake of the Lord's Supper; open communionists welcomed to the Lord's table all Christian believers, whatever their baptismal sentiments might be. An important controversy on this subject will have to be described.

Friends commenced the century with a confession of the same principles as had been taught by George Fox and William Penn. They insisted upon the spirituality of religion, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They renounced the common forms of

[1] See *Memoir of Andrew Fuller*, by his son.

public devotion, and found sweet satisfaction in silent worship. They opposed tithes and Church rates, and condemned any engagement in war. They had declined in numbers during the century, but were numerous at the end of it in London, Norwich, and other places. Some new modifications of rule had been admitted, and though peculiarities of dress and speech were still retained, strictness of observance was in a measure relaxed, and some young Quakers had more intercourse with outward society than their ancestors would have approved. Declensions in evangelical beliefs were at hand, preparing for grave controversies in the first quarter of this century.

Moravianism, of foreign growth, still kept a foothold in a few English minds. It retained evangelical sentiment, primitive episcopal order, and peculiar institutes of its own. Fetter Lane, where Wesley had once held fellowship with them, was the principal metropolitan locality for worship and discipline. Their missionary achievements in Greenland, the West Indies, and other places became increasingly known in England, and awakened deep sympathy in evangelical Churches. That circumstance gave the chief distinction to this interesting community when the century commenced.

Political and religious disabilities of many kinds weighed heavily upon Roman Catholics, and they were prevented from carrying out their own system as they wished ; but their prospects brightened as the old century expired. The Gordon riots indicated

a hatred of popery amongst the lower class, that hatred arising more from traditions of Marian intolerance than from any intelligent acquaintance with the dogmas of the Church. But severity of English law against the Romish body gradually relaxed; increase was slow; it became more rapid afterwards. Catholic emancipation was looming in the distance, and how it was brought about will be described in its proper place.

Methodism was already a great spiritual power in the country. Not sixty years old in its full organization, it exerted an influence far beyond its own borders, and, as seen in the light of history since, it carried within an inspiration which awakened men's souls to a sense of religion all over the world. Its growth has been amazing, and the secret of what it is may be found in the bosom of what it was. We find it in good working order when the century opened, and that, notwithstanding shocks which it received during the previous ten years. Wesley died in 1791, and some of its friends were in a state of painful apprehension lest the loss of the founder should immediately check its progress. The human master-hand could no longer guide the helm, and looking at its fortunes apart from Divine power, which unbelief was unable to see, we do not wonder that there were those who prognosticated terrible disasters, if not a total wreck.

Persecution did not cease, but in many quarters it was greatly mitigated. In some instances, where

the preachers had been cruelly assailed by mobs, they were now welcomed with something like an ovation. Cornwall afforded a remarkable instance of this kind; and in other counties, as will appear, congregations were multiplied, new chapels were built, and large accessions of converts were made to the society.

The effects of Methodism were felt outside itself; they penetrated the Church of England and dissenting denominations. Whilst many of the old-fashioned clergy looked upon it with as much dislike as ever still it stirred some amongst them to a discharge of neglected duties lest all their parishioners should be drawn away to Wesleyan conventicles. Ministers and people of the old Dissent continued, beyond the end of the past century, to regard Methodism as an enthusiastic outbreak which might before very long die out for want of fuel to feed the fire; but others saw in it the work of the Spirit of God, and sought to share in the Divine influence which had fallen on the heads and hearts of their brethren.

Psalmody, which had been neglected in England beyond what some readers would suppose, the Wesleys took up from the beginning, with a clear-sighted view of its importance and with a zeal that insured success. Methodism never could have become what it did without its unparalleled hymn-book. That perhaps has been more effective in preserving its evangelical theology than Wesley's "Sermons," and his "Notes on the New Testament"; where

one man read the homilies and the exposition, a thousand sang the hymns. All divisions in Christendom have a stamp imprinted on their piety, by which they are easily known. As to the *fervour* of Methodism, there can be no mistake ; and it is owing largely to the concrete and personal character of its psalmody. It does not deal in the calm, intellectual contemplation of abstract themes, however sacred and sublime ; but in the experience of believers, as soldiers of Christ, "fighting," "watching," "suffering," "working," and "seeking for full redemption." You catch in them the trumpet blast, the cry of the wounded, the shout of victory, and the dirge at a warrior's funeral.

Calvinistic Methodism attained its zenith soon after the death of Lady Huntingdon in 1791. Her ministers were popular, and the chapels in several places were crowded, especially in London, Bath, and Brighton. But other congregations, not identified with her ladyship's Connexion, were also of the Calvinistic Methodist type. Though Wesleyan hymns did not suit their assemblies, music such as was popular in the Methodist connexion met their taste ; and their psalmody was scarcely less attractive than the remarkable preachers who filled their pulpits.

Such was the state of English Christendom at the opening of the century, and this brief review may serve to prepare my readers for details presented in the following pages.

CHAPTER I.

1800–1815.

POLITICAL RELATIONS.

AS the early part of the eighteenth century was marked by the union of England and Scotland, so the first year of the nineteenth is associated with the union of England and Ireland; as the political event in the former case had its ecclesiastical bearings, so it happened in the latter, presenting a still more obvious connection.

The Irish union, if not produced, was certainly promoted by the rebellion of 1798, in which Roman Catholic antipathies played so conspicuous and frightful a part. The sixteenth century Reformation only touched the surface; it did not penetrate, as in our own land, the depths of Irish society. The peasantry and the middle classes, to a great extent, remained firmly attached to the Church of Rome. The Celtic race in the sister isle, as elsewhere, manifested an aversion to Protestant change, whilst that change was gladly welcomed by brethren of the Saxon race. In England the ascendency of the reformed Church resulted from the wide adoption of reformed principles; but in Ireland such ascendency, so far as it obtained, resulted from political

enactments, not from popular conversion. The religious history of the sixteenth century amongst our neighbours exhibits on every page signs of resistance to what was deemed the new faith. The Irishman, like the Spaniard, showed himself intensely conservative in his ecclesiastical beliefs, as well as in many other things; he would not have the worship of his fathers altered. Unsettlement and rebellion were the consequences. Politics, no doubt, had to do with what occurred, but religion appears as a main factor. Drastic remedies, employed afterwards, only made the disease worse; Cromwell and William III. won victories over the strength of Ireland, but could not win the heart of the nation. They deepened hatred; it was not likely that they should inspire love. Act after act was passed for the purpose of crushing Roman Catholicism. In 1697 it was, we are told, naturally judged that peace and safety were endangered by the great number of popish clergy, who stirred up strife and rebellion, and did everything in their power to suppress loyalty. Therefore it was enacted that all popish archbishops, vicars-general, deans, Jesuits, monks, and friars should depart out of the kingdom; that for them to return would be high treason, and any person who concealed them should be subject to penalties—in some cases the forfeiture of lands and goods for life. Burials were forbidden in monasteries, abbeys, and convents; moreover a statute was passed to prevent Protestants marrying Papists. All this has been vindicated on the ground that such statutes were not penal statutes against Romanists, but statutes

protective of Protestants endangered by Romanists; and that in the course of fifty years the Church of Ireland, after bitter sufferings, had by a merciful providence been twice rescued from annihilation.[1] And as these measures of legislative repression went on, little was done to enlighten the people and by argument and persuasion, to show them a more excellent way. The spiritual condition of the country was shamefully neglected, notwithstanding the number, the resources, and the prestige of protestant clergymen; the Church with difficulty held its own, though it had the advantage of political establishment. It is acknowledged by its defenders that the latter part of the eighteenth century was on the whole a season of supineness, that her ministers used little diligence in endeavouring to enlarge her borders "and dispense to recusants and sectaries the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the rites and worship of primitive Christianity, as enjoyed in the Church's communion."[2]

No wonder that under these circumstances insubordination obtained amongst an ignorant and bigoted race. The rebellion of 1798 resulted from long oppression, aggravated by the intolerant spiritual policy of the Roman Catholics themselves. Each Church hated the other, the bigotry and utterly unchristian spirit of the Papist surpassing that of the Protestant; had their places been changed in relation to political power, we can easily infer what the con-

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[1] Mant: *History of the Church of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 75.

[2] *Ibid.*

sequences would have been. This must be allowed on behalf of Irish Protestants. An influential party amongst them procured, by way of concession to their popish fellow subjects, an act of Parliament for endowing the College of Maynooth in the county of Kildare. Religion on both sides was unfortunately recognized as an affair to be supported and regulated by State pay and State law; and so a mischief was introduced into Ireland, perhaps with good intentions, which has been a source of controversy and trouble ever since. A legitimate and more promising policy of conciliation was pursued by a few men enlightened above their fellows. The Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr. Dickson, wisely said, coercion had been tried long enough. With respect to Catholic emancipation he considered it matter of right, not of favour, and a reform of Parliament as an act of policy which the state of the country rendered absolutely necessary.

The rebellion was attended by frightful excesses. It raged through Wicklow, Wexford, Kildare, and Carlow. Houses were destroyed, murders committed, a man and one of his children were roasted to death, Protestants were dragged out to be piked on a bridge, and hurled over the parapet into the river; a clergyman was bled to death in a pig trough, after which mad wretches danced round him, washing their feet in his blood. Justice requires it to be said that the Romish hierarchy and the respectable classes of the community reprobated such atrocities, and did what they could to put an end to them; but the lower orders of the priesthood were furious, and animated

the rebels to the perpetration of most revolting cruelties. "Burn, destroy, and murder up to your knees in blood," are said to have been the insurgents' watchwords. That something should be done to prevent the recurrence of such scenes every humane person felt to be indispensable. Foreigners had joined in the rebellion, and the object plainly was to separate Ireland entirely from English rule and the British crown. The lord-lieutenant, Marquis Cornwallis, in 1799 called the Irish Parliament's attention to the fact, and urged, in his majesty's name, the employment of means to consolidate "as far as possible into one firm and lasting fabric the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire." The Irish House of Commons rejected the proposal by a small majority, but the House of Lords agreed to it; and the British legislature presented an address to the king, recommending a complete and entire union to be established by the consent of both Parliaments. The proposal was then carried in the Irish houses, and afterwards by the Lords and Commons of England.

One of the provisions was that the episcopalian organization of the two countries should constitute one Protestant community, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland. The doctrine, discipline, and government of the whole were to be the same as that established by law in this country, and the preservation of the bond was declared to be a fundamental part of the union. Four lords spiritual of Ireland were, by rotation of sessions, to sit and vote with the English peers: the primate in the first

session, then the archbishops of Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam successively. The suffragan bishops, in like manner, were to sit according to rotation in a certain prescribed order, beginning with the prelates of Meath, Kildare, and Kerry.

The first to take his seat was a Scotchman, the Honourable William Stuart, fifth son of the Earl of Bute, who succeeded Dr. Newcome as primate in 1800. The second was an Irishman, Thomas Lewis O'Beirne, who had been private secretary to Earl Fitzwilliam, made Bishop of Ossory in 1794, and translated to Meath in 1798. He had delivered a spirited charge—condemnatory of non-residence as violating what the clergy owed to the redeemed of Christ—had revived the office of rural dean, and in other ways had distinguished himself by zeal and diligence. The third was an Englishman, George Lewis Jones, formerly Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and appointed to Kildare in 1790. The fourth was an Englishman, the Honourable F. A. Hervey, second son of the Earl of Bristol, translated from Cloyne to Derry in 1768. Noble, rich, ambitious, he had made himself popular in Ireland by a zealous assertion of its political rights. Much is said of him; eulogized by one, he is pronounced erratic by another. He spent much of his time in Italy, and when attending Parliament in Dublin, he rode there in state, accompanied by a body of dragoons.[1]

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[1] Hardy's *Life of the Earl of Charlemont and Barrington; Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation.* Cited by Mant, vol. ii. pp. 688–691.

These four prelates, on August 1st, 1800, appeared on the episcopal bench at Westminster; but Irish dignitaries had long before been in the habit of spending much of their time in England, and had made themselves noted in the highest circles. Not to go back to Dean Swift, it may be mentioned that Percy, Bishop of Dromore, editor of "The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," though spending much time in his diocese, was the friend of Shenstone, Johnson, Goldsmith, and Reynolds; he was familiar with London society, and we find him preaching for the Sons of the Clergy in 1769. Less known now is Marley, Bishop of Clonfert; but perhaps he was still more acquainted with the metropolis than his contemporary. Bennett, Bishop of Cork and Ross, resided in London the latter part of his life, which extended to the year 1820. Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe, "replete with wit and humour," was, like Percy and Marley, a member of the "Literary Club" in town, where he met his fellow countrymen Goldsmith and Burke. Bishops from the neighbouring isle had been accustomed to visit London, so that the four representatives did, in this respect, little more than perpetuate an old custom.

The ecclesiastical change consequently effected on the other side of the Irish Channel, was very great, inasmuch as spiritual independence passed away with that which was political. When the Irish Parliament disappeared, the self-control of the Irish Church, so far as it existed, disappeared with it. But the interests of England were scarcely touched by an ecclesiastical revolution which, with regard to herself,

was little more than nominal. The four, who every year crossed the water that they might exercise their new functions, contributed but a trifling addition to the government of the Church of England ; and at a recent period, even in matters vitally affecting their own interests—especially in the recent case of Irish disestablishment—Irish prelates were rather subjects than agents.

In respect of legislation, Ireland came completely under English control ; and the religious affairs of that country therefore were deeply affected by what went on in St. Stephen's Chapel and the adjacent White Hall.[1] There can be no doubt that certain plans contemplated by Mr. Pitt in reference to the Irish Roman Catholics were checked and defeated by Irish Orangemen. He would, if he could, have carried a measure for Catholic emancipation, and for assisting to support the Catholic clergy, together with a reform of the tithe system ; but his wishes were thwarted, not only by royal resistance, but by the protestant oligarchy of Ireland.

Soon after this political change came a patriotic excitement in England, connected with continental politics, which touched upon religion in another and far different way. The policy of Napoleon Buonaparte, and his designs on this country, created an immense alarm in 1803. People now smile at the idea of a French invasion, but we have the word of M. Thiers for it, that the great French general that year rested confident and happy, in preparing for an attempt

[1] The Peers' New Chamber was so called.

which he believed would make him master of the world. When Dr. Dibdin was at Bayeux in 1818, he wrote in reference to the tapestry there :

"I have learnt, even here, of what importance this tapestry roll was considered in the time of Buonaparte's threatened invasion of our country ; and that, after displaying it at Paris for two or three months, to awaken the curiosity and excite the love of conquest among the citizens, it was conveyed to one or two seaport towns, and exhibited upon the stage as a most important *matériel* in dramatic effect." [1]

Flat-bottomed boats, to convey soldiers across the Channel, were talked of round every hearth in England, and were expected every day and every hour. In the Isle of Wight, though guarded by shipping, the inhabitants were afraid to go to bed, and provision was made to carry away women and children on the first appearance of the terrifying flotilla. Pikes were sent to arm the men, orders were given respecting signals of the enemy's approach, and farmers were directed to burn their corn, as soon as Frenchmen neared our shores. In Essex like terror prevailed. Lawyers' clerks were drilled at Colchester ; schools were broken up, property was concealed under flower beds, and women and children ran about the streets shrieking as if they were mad.[2] This state of things occurred at intervals for above a year. Yet there were not wanting individuals in the upper as well as the lower circles who strongly sympathized with the

[1] *Antiquarian Tour in France and Germany*, vol. i. p. 251.

[2] Related by a friend then living there.

military chief of the French nation. At a later period the learned Whig, Dr. Parr, said to Mr. Ticknor, the American author, "I should not think that I had done my duty if I went to bed any night without praying for the success of Napoleon Buonaparte."[1]

Government determined on a fast day (October 19th), when people were to humble themselves before God for obtaining pardon and for averting Divine judgments. Times of calamity draw Christians together in spite of theological differences, and the Church then looked more kindly than usual on Dissenters, just as it did on the eve of the Revolution of 1688. So in the crisis under consideration, friendly sentiments were expressed by national Church authorities towards Nonconforming brethren, and a prayer was framed and published by which Divine mercy was sought to put away dissensions, so that, notwithstanding differences on doubtful points and external worship, the nation might be united in bonds of charity. This spirit of intercession commended itself generally; and in dissenting meeting-houses, as well as parish churches, it was adopted by multitudes gathered within the walls. A short lull came in the long storm between Anglo-Catholics and Puritans when the Spanish armada steered within sight of the English coast; Englishmen joined hand and heart in defiance of Philip II. So, when France threatened our fathers with an invasion, animosities between Churchmen and Dissenters were suspended, at least for a moment, and

[1] *Life of George Ticknor*, vol. i. p. 50.

they united in prayer as well as effort against the expected foe.

Numerous patriotic sermons were preached, and some of them even published. Amongst them was one delivered by Robert Hall, in which he declared his detestation of Buonaparte's character. "The last ten pages were thought by many, and by Mr. Pitt among the number, to be fully equal in genuine eloquence to any passage of the same length that can be selected from either ancient or modern orators"; and there can be no doubt that it suggested to Sir James Mackintosh some thoughts in his defence of Peltier.[1] Appealing to the Most High, the non-conformist orator exclaimed:

"Go forth with our hosts in the day of battle! Impart, in addition to their hereditary valour, that confidence of success which springs from Thy presence! Pour into their hearts the spirit of departed heroes! Inspire them with Thine own; and while led by Thine hand, and fighting under Thy banners, open Thou their eyes to behold in every valley and in every plain what the prophet beheld by the same illumination—chariots of fire and horses of fire."[2]

No wonder some took exception to the martial tone of this rhetorical discourse. Some attacked it even with bitterness; but it was praised, as we have seen, in the highest quarters, and we are told it "had the happiest effect in enkindling the flame of generous, active patriotism."

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[1] Memoir of Robert Hall by Dr. Gregory. Hall's Works, vol. vi. p. 69.

[2] Hall's Works, vol. i. p. 192.

Dr. Rippon, another Baptist minister, preached at the drum-head in Margate Fort, and eulogized Mr. Pitt "as an eminent and long-continued blessing to the whole globe"; he spoke of George III. as one through whom the Almighty "had beatified the British empire with the best of earthly monarchs." The popularity of the king and of his prime minister was great amongst most pious people, who, believing that Buonaparte aimed at subjugating Europe, dreaded the consequence in relation to religious as well as civil liberty. The feeling which existed in this country towards him, and the French nation at large, can scarcely be believed by the present generation, now that, happily, national animosities are kept in check by common sense, if not by Christian principle. Hatred of our neighbours across the Channel penetrated the breasts of schoolboys and blazed round family hearths. Lads, I remember, fought "Boney," as they called him, on the slate and in the playground; and girls rivalled their brothers by unfeminine outbursts of patriotism. Amongst all ranks and ages Frenchmen were counted natural enemies, whom it was a virtue to attack and conquer; and a share in the continental conflict was deemed, not only a stern necessity, but the means of adding fresh glory to the British name. Popular modes of representing the French general betrayed a malignity which it is melancholy to remember; and old folks may well feel ashamed to confess the unchristian sentiments which prevailed in the days of their youth.

Passing from these introductory notices with re-

ference to the union with Ireland and the French war, as they bear on the religious history of the period, let me for a moment glance at certain parliamentary Acts respecting the English clergy and the English Church. One passed in the year 1803, to restrain clerical farming, showed that incumbents were suspected of entering upon agricultural pursuits beyond what was proper for such as were devoted to a sacred calling; and, about the same time, residence was enforced on rectors and vicars—an enforcement indicative of that extensive neglect of pastoral duties which formed one of the crying scandals of the age. Both pieces of legislation betokened a spirit of reform feebly beginning to check evils long deplored by the better-minded members of the established Church.

In a similar line of improvement the condition of the poorer clergy attracted parliamentary notice. Queen Anne's Bounty assisted poor clergymen, and from 1809 to 1820 the governors distributed the sum of one million.[1] Amidst inequalities of clerical income, which, though reduced in our time, are still obvious, these measures must have proved a comfort to men struggling with the ills of poverty, so much more painfully felt by educated persons, occupying a position that imposed additional pecuniary obligations whilst it conferred additional social advantages. Provision for the spiritual wants of the people were very insufficient during the first quarter of the present century. Hence measures were also commenced

[1] May's *Constitutional History of England*, vol. ii. p. 216.

for the encouragement of church building, not on the voluntary principle, but by parliamentary grants. Such measures were slight and ineffective until the year 1813, when no less than a million of money was voted in aid of new places of worship, to meet the wants of an enormously increasing population ; half a million more was voted in 1824, and exchequer bill loans were also given to about the same amount.[1] At a subsequent period help was rendered in a like direction by a remission of duty on materials employed in sacred structures.

We come in closer contact with the religion of this country, and penetrate into the inner life of some of its communities, when we examine debates in the House of Lords extending over portions of three years. To understand them we must attend to peculiarities in Protestant Dissent, with which members of the national establishment are not familiar.

It is considered by most Nonconformists that those who undertake the pastoral office, especially in cities and large towns and amongst educated people, should pass through a preparatory course of study ; and for that purpose they establish and support numerous colleges. Moreover, they believe that it is desirable in most cases that men who are pastors should devote themselves entirely to the duties of their particular office, in connection of course with efforts for the promotion of religion, improvement, and benevolence generally. Also, it is customary, more as a matter of order and propriety than on

[1] May's *Constitutional History of England*, vol. iii. p. 215.

any other account, to confine the administration of baptism, and ministerial presidency at the Lord's table when the holy supper is observed, to those who sustain the office of the pastorate. Hence a line of demarcation prevails between those who have devoted themselves to pastoral work, and those who have not, though in other ways they seek to instruct and benefit their fellow men. Consequently the nonconformist clergy, as stated ministers are sometimes called, do not become separated by any hard and fast line from their lay brethren, as is the case in episcopalian and perhaps presbyterian bodies. No priesthood is recognized, except the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and that of all believers in Him, who, according to the New Testament, are divinely constituted in common as "a royal priesthood."

These opinions being held, it is common amongst Dissenters for men who are not pastors—not ordained for the ministry—to teach and preach, if they have the ability and opportunities for exercising it. In other words, lay agency is extensively employed. It is beginning to be seen, even in episcopalian communions, that laymen may instruct their friends and neighbours in the truths of Christianity by oral addresses, whether called sermons or not. It was not thought so in the Church of England in the early part of this century; preaching was left to clergymen. Unhappily some clergymen were not zealous in the discharge of their duties, and the rural districts were neglected to a lamentable extent. It was on this account that lay preaching became customary amongst Dissenters. The Methodists, by

the employment of "local preachers"—or laymen who occasionally taught religious truth from a pulpit or desk in their own locality—gave a decided spur to such efforts amongst other Nonconformists. According to the Toleration Act, as it is styled, persons who took the oaths there prescribed, were freed from liability to the pains and penalties mentioned in certain Acts of Queen Elizabeth and Charles II.; and as religious liberty was not understood seventy years ago as it is now, it became a usual practice for Nonconformist preachers and teachers to take the oaths prescribed by the Toleration Act, and so protect themselves in efforts for usefulness. Students in colleges, before their ordination, took oaths, for protection in village preaching; it was a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance.

An attempt was made in the House of Lords, not to repeal, but to restrict the law in existence, not to remove an unnecessary obligation, but to limit the exercise of religious freedom. The attempt professedly aimed at the prevention of an abuse.

In the year 1809, Viscount Sidmouth called attention to persons who took out licences to preach, for no other purpose, as he alleged, than to secure exemption from filling parish offices, and from serving in the militia. He moved for a return of preaching licences from the year 1780 to the year 1808; and though he at first pleaded only for the correction of an abuse, he showed he had a further design in reference to Church interests and Dissenting activity. This led Lord Harrowby to say, in a debate which followed Lord Sidmouth's speech, that he did not

believe the Church's welfare would be advanced by restrictions put upon Nonconformity. Returns were made, in accordance with the motion, to the effect that 3,672 licences had been granted between 1760 and 1808, of which 1,068 had been issued within the last seven years. The next year, 1810, his lordship complained of the returns as unsatisfactory. Other returns followed, with additional particulars, but with the same result. The Dissenting deputies watched the proceedings, and endeavoured to persuade the mover of the resolution to abandon his design, on the ground that any attempt to interfere with the Toleration Act would be ineffectual, except in the way of mischief. It was too late in the day, they said, to touch liberties granted at the Revolution, and a merely seeming purpose of that kind could not fail to disturb and embitter religious relations, which happily, after stormy conflicts, had settled down into comparative repose. His lordship averred, in reply, that he had no designs opposed to freedom; he only wished to reform a social abuse. But he persevered, and in 1811 introduced "a Bill to explain and render more effectual the Acts of the first of William and Mary, and the nineteenth of George III., so far as relates to Dissenting Ministers." In support of his Bill, he not only urged what he had done from the first, but added, that persons obtained licences without any inquiry as to their moral or intellectual qualifications. He said that amongst them were "tailors, pig drovers, and chimney sweepers"; still he did not object to their social status if they were considered by Dissenters as fit to teach and preach; what he objected

to was their self-election. He would, therefore, have the licences confined to such as obtained the recommendation of at least six respectable householders, and who also gathered congregations willing to receive their instructions.

Lord Holland opposed the Bill, saying that every person had a right to propagate such opinions as he conscientiously believed.

The first reading followed as a matter of form; but no sooner did it become known to Nonconformists generally, no sooner did they carefully study the measure, than intense excitement arose, such as always appears when any assault is made on the domain of cherished liberties. The rights of educated ministers settled over respectable congregations were not affected by this freak; but two classes of zealous workers—first, local Methodist preachers, many of them imperfectly educated; and next, laymen of other denominations, who sought to carry the Gospel into dark corners—found, to their dismay, that liberty of action would be imperilled should the Bill become law. The Dissenting Christendom of England, in sympathy with these teachers of religion, and full of jealousy for rights handed down from the days of William III., put forth all its strength in decided resistance of so reprehensible an attack; since, whatever Lord Sidmouth might say or think—and he claimed credit for being no enemy to toleration—there were others who supported his measure and encouraged his efforts, with unmistakably sinister designs. Clergymen said that these licences fostered contempt for both the religious and the civil institu-

tions of the country; that they interfered with, and even defeated, the exertions of parish incumbents; and that common people were taught by these irresponsible emissaries to despise and reject the Church Catechism and the Book of Common Prayer.[1]

Flames of excitement were fanned into fiercer blaze when it was discovered that Churchmen were seeking to strengthen the Establishment at the expense of Nonconformity, and recent attacks on the free churches of the country contributed to increase the indignation. A barrister had just before written a pamphlet, in which he exclaimed: "It is surely a most illegal, as well as insulting violation of the spirit of the British Constitution, that any class or order of men in the kingdom should dare to erect themselves into a society for the purpose of exterminating doctrines which, in their judgment, are unsound; and introducing, by means of agents and emissaries, a certain system of religious belief, which they arrogantly pronounce to be the only true faith." He denounced the men he had in view as "blockheads tainted with the mania of preaching, without a single requisite" for the purpose; and as living "on that incredulity of the ignorant upon which impostors for ever feed and fatten."[2]

These bolts had been launched at the persons threatened by Lord Sidmouth's Bill, and nobody, knowing what human nature is, can wonder that the

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[1] *Life of Lord Sidmouth*, by Dean Pellew, vol. iii. p. 44.

[2] Quoted in Waddington's *Congregational History*, 1800–1850, p. 218.

measure, read in the light cast on it by certain fanatics, roused Nonconformists to do their utmost for its overthrow. I well knew in my early days some who took an active part in the resistance, and have received from their lips vivid details illuminating the history of that now forgotten episode. The feelings of all who valued religious liberty were stirred. Not only did the old Dissenters, but Methodists, the Countess of Huntingdon's connection, even such men as Rowland Hill and Matthew Wilks, slow to enter the political arena, combined with others to resist the measure; and a large representative meeting was convened in the Metropolis. In less than forty-eight hours, 336 petitions were procured from the City and neighbourhood.[1] Petitions were presented by Lord Stanhope, who said that if there was one subject more than another in which he thought it impolitic for the legislature to interfere, without a real and absolute necessity, it was the subject of religion; and then he begged his noble friend to withdraw the Bill. Other peers followed on the same side—Lord Holland, Earl Grey, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earls of Moira, Rosslyn, and Lauderdale, and Lord Erskine. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Sutton, delivered a memorable speech, in which he said: "Although no persecution was intended, and although some misconception might exist on the subject, the flood of petitions which had been laid on the table ought to convince their lordships of the necessity of stopping short for the present. However he might lament

[1] Skeat's *History*, p. 556.

what he conceived to be the errors of Protestant Dissenters, it was to be recollected the Bible was the foundation of their religious belief, as well as that of the Established Church, and was, or might be, in the hands of every member of the Empire; and it was to be recollected that the best of interpretations were but the interpretations of men, and that the best of men were liable to error. He was sure that so long as the Church of England should endure as a Church, the Dissenters would not be disturbed by the Church of England; and as he was no prophet, he did not wish to foretell what might happen to them after it was no more. The noble Viscount," he went on to say, "who brought forward the scheme, strangely stated that he conceived he had the sanction of Dissenters in doing so; but Dissenters had thought fit to oppose it, and they must be allowed to be the best judges of their own interests." [1]

There was a tone of civility in this speech, which, though equalled and surpassed since by most reverend prelates, may be compared advantageously with effusions which had been sometimes heard from occupants of the same bench in earlier days.

The Bill was lost; and now that the disturbance it excited is amongst things that are past, we can with judicial fairness review the crisis. The literary ignorance of some amongst the licensed preachers of that day was made plain enough. They could not write, they could not spell, they could scarcely read. Their

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[1] A full account of the Parliamentary Debates is given in *The Proceedings of the Dissenting Deputies*, p. 108.

discourses violated rules of grammar, and offended the taste of educated people; but still the rough and racy way in which some of them were able to talk, was more effective, with those whom they addressed, than orations fitted for ears polite.

Lord Sidmouth always contended he did not wish to injure Dissenters. Perhaps he might imagine his measure would improve their religious efficiency; and when he found so many up in arms against him, he complained that he had been misled by certain Nonconformists, who, as he affirmed, considered the Bill to be reasonable in its principle, and moderate in its provisions.[1] Such statements, though not meant to deceive, are often deceptive, as men looking at the same subject from different points of view are sadly apt to misunderstand one another. Possibly some Dissenters thought the Bill capable of amendment, and even consented to certain of its provisions, wishing to improve imperfect agencies for the spread of religion. On the other hand, there were, no doubt, men who manifested extravagance in advocating religious liberty, and attributed to all their opponents what could be fairly laid at the door of only a few. But at least, as the Archbishop of Canterbury acknowledged, the measure was injudicious, for Dissenters, as he said, must be allowed to be the best judges of their own interests; and, in reference to the ministrations of laymen who had no regular congregations, the Bill would have precluded praiseworthy endeavours to do good. Lord Sidmouth's Bill read a

[1] Pellew's *Life of Lord Sidmouth*, vol. iii. p. 65.

lesson to Dissenters, which they did not fail to learn. Three days after its defeat, they met in London and founded the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty. Two hundred congregations contributed to its support. The final object of the Society was to "obtain the repeal of every law which prevented the complete enjoyment of religious liberty."[1]

Soon after the failure of this attempt, an Act was passed by which Dissenters were relieved from oaths required by the Toleration Law, and also from the declaration prescribed in the Act of 1779. The new Act repealed the Five Mile and Conventicle Acts. By the former Act no person was allowed to preach till he had taken the oaths; by this Act any person might preach, being merely liable to be called upon to take them once, *if required in writing from a justice of the peace.* The Toleration Act did not provide for the punishment of people who disturbed religious worship *outside*, but this Act imposed a penalty of forty pounds on any one guilty of making disturbance within or without.[2] This relief was accomplished in 1812; and the following year Unitarians were delivered from exposure to penalties affecting their particular persuasion. They had already escaped, through the liberality of friends and neighbours, who would not call into operation existing laws; but now, by express Act of Parliament,[3]

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[1] Skeats, p. 558.

[2] Brooks' *History of Religious Liberty*, vol. ii. p. 395.

[3] May, vol. iii. pp. 109, 135.

their penal liabilities were brought to an end. The excitement produced by Lord Sidmouth's Bill thus led to the extension of religious freedom in this country. Good came out of evil.

Almost coincident with these discussions were others of a similar character. Important legislation in reference to our Colonial empire occurred at the close of the first ten years of this century; and as it touched directly the religious interests of an immense number of British subjects, it secured special attention from legislators who were anxious for the spiritual welfare of Great Britain and its dependencies. Those dependencies, though then far from having reached their present proportions, numbered millions on millions of human souls; and the subjects who came most prominently within the notice of Christian philanthropists, were negroes on the sugar plantations of the West Indies, and Hindoos toiling on the rice grounds of Eastern Asia. The Legislature of St. Vincent's Island in 1792 passed an Act, forbidding any one except the regular clergy to preach without a licence, under penalty of imprisonment, of exile, of death—the capital sentence to be executed on those who should venture on a return to the island after having been banished. Such a monstrous law was an outrage on justice and humanity; and the Sovereign in council a year afterwards, annulled the statute. But the Jamaica legislature manifested a like spirit of intolerance in the year 1809, and silenced for the second time Nonconformist missionaries sent out from England for the conversion of the slaves. Struggling against the spirit of freedom alive at

home, the planters and rulers of the West adopted ingenious devices to accomplish their ends; but his Majesty in council resisted these efforts to enslave the minds as well as the bodies of the blacks, and issued an order forbidding, under any pretence whatever, the enactment of laws pertaining to religion, without first submitting them for examination to the King and his privy council.[1]

A still more momentous matter arose when the time came for renewing the East Indian charter. The Company had interfered with English endeavours to promote the spiritual welfare of Hindoos; but, stimulated by the religious public, the Government of the day took up the subject, and in the new charter paid attention to the religious wants of our Eastern Empire. When, in 1811 and 1812, the affairs of the Company largely occupied the public mind, and came before the House of Commons for Imperial settlement, the Ministry manifested a decided disposition in favour of reversing the old restrictive policy. Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, told a deputation representing the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, that the Government considered the gradual introduction of Christianity into India as beneficent and wise—that the neglect of religious improvement there was disgraceful—and that it was his inclination and duty to adopt measures to terminate the existing system. He added, that the Government ought to be empowered to permit pious men of every sect to visit India, and reside there; and

[1] Brooks' *History of Religious Liberty*, vol. ii. p. 406.

08963

that no obstacles should be capriciously interposed to the progress of an object which the good and wise must unite to desire.[1] In 1813, the new charter was submitted to the House of Commons, and, in addition to the securities for religious freedom in missionary enterprises, it was proposed to appoint a Bishop for India, with three archdeacons to superintend the chaplains of different settlements. Evidence was taken on various points in the new charter, and Warren Hastings—that conspicuous and almost awful figure in the previous Government of India, who was now in his eightieth year—appeared before the Commons Select Committee. Interrogated with regard to religious questions, he expressed opinions "singularly vague and undecided," evincing "a most philosophical indifference, both to the general interests of Christianity and the welfare of the Protestant Episcopal Church."[2] When the Bill reached the Lords, its religious aspects came again under review, and Lord Erskine, in one of his flashes of impassioned eloquence, exclaimed :

"Do not forget, my Lords, that this country holds her Indian provinces by the sole tenure of Christianity ; and if she neglect to impart its blessings, which we enjoy in a superior degree, she may lose them ; and that tremendous storm which has burst upon Europe, from which we have mercifully escaped that we might propagate the Christian faith, may cross the Channel, and fall on our own guilty heads."

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[1] Brooks, vol. ii. p. 410.

[2] Thornton's *History of the British Empire in India*, vol. iv. p. 228.

Lord Holland in soberer words, and inspired by an intense love of religious liberty, praised the legislative recognition of the rights of conscience in benevolent persons, who might feel it their duty to seek the salvation of our Hindoo subjects.

Just at the commencement of the great Indian debates in 1813, news reached England of the death of Henry Martyn, on whose life and labours for the good of the East, large hopes were built by religious members of the House. He had gone out, it is true, not as a professed missionary, but as an Indian chaplain, and had consequently been in the receipt of a handsome income; but no one, in habits of self-denial, and entire consecration to the service of Christ, could have surpassed that noble-minded minister of Christ. "It is a mysterious providence:"[1] exclaimed one of the Parliamentary debaters, as good men are wont to speak of dispensations which cast shadows over their own plans and purposes. No doubt the sorrowful tidings damped the spirits, though they did not depress the zeal, of those engaged in the cause of religion and humanity. Martyn was in Persia, on his way homewards to England to confer with his friends on the subject of his Indian enterprise, when, from the effect of a fever or the plague, he expired in October, 1812, at Tocat or Comana, in Pontus, where perhaps Paul was travelling when smitten by "bodily sickness,"[2] where, certainly,

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[1] Abridged from *Life of Wilberforce*, p. 409.

[2] Translated in the Authorized Version, "infirmity of the flesh" (Gal. iv. 14).

Chrysostom died. "There was a great similarity in the last sufferings of these apostolic men (Chrysostom and Martyn)—the same intolerable pain in the head, the same inclement weather, and the same cruelty on the part of those who urged on the journey."[1] The remains of the modern English apostle lie near the remains of the ancient Greek Father, both awaiting the resurrection of the just. The minute details of Martyn's sufferings, written by himself down to a few days before his death, when they reached England, made a deep impression, and tended to imbue with a spirit of self-sacrifice all who, in the strength of God, might venture to tread in his heroic steps. His memory has not been fruitless, nor was his work; and it will be a relief for the reader to pause in this narrative of parliamentary debates, to recall the following story.

Some years since, an English gentleman spent several weeks at Shiraz. While there, he met one day at dinner with Mohammed Rahem, a person of middle age, with a thoughtful, gentle countenance. The Englishman was full of levity. Mohammed reproved him with a look of sorrow. Our countryman learned that he was a priest living in retirement, and afterwards ascertained the particulars of his story. He said a beardless English stranger, enfeebled by disease, had dwelt for a year in the city, teaching the religion of Jesus. Mohammed treated him with contempt at first, but was overcome by the missionary's patience and love. He came to see that

[1] *Life of St. Paul*, by Conybeare and Howson, vol. i. p. 295.

Christianity was divine, but feared to avow it. "Just before the stranger left," says Mohammed, "I could not forbear paying him a visit. Our conversation sealed my conversion. He gave me a book; it has ever been my constant companion, the study of it has formed my most delightful occupation; its contents have often consoled me." Upon this the narrator put into the Englishman's hands a copy of the New Testament in Persian. On one of the blank leaves was written: "'There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.' Henry Martyn."[1]

Foremost in advocating the spiritual interests of India was William Wilberforce, then in the fullest maturity of his age, and in the brightest glory of his fame. He had carried his grand abolition measure six years before, and had thereby won undying honours as a prince among English philanthropists. No Commoner had such Nestor-like eloquence, and could so win a way, by sweet reasonableness, to the minds and hearts of Christian politicians on both sides the House. His insignificant figure, his bent form, his head reclining on his shoulder, his careless attitude, his incessant motion, his benevolent countenance his sharp twinkling eye, his hand playing with his eye-glass, were familiar to all parties; and when he rose to speak, his musical voice hushed to silence the buzz of conversation, and fascinated the occupants of crowded benches. Most anxiously did

[1] I quoted this in the second volume of *Religion in England under Queen Anne and the Georges*. It was out of place there, and I omitted it in the new edition of the whole work on *Religion in England*. It finds a better place here.

he support the cause of religion as connected with the great Indian debate, and most carefully and sagaciously did he gauge the temper of the House. "The truth is,"—these are his words written to a friend,—"and a dreadful truth it is, that the opinions of nine-tenths, or at least of a vast majority, of the House of Commons would be against any motion which the friends of religion might make; but I trust it is very different in the body of our people; and petitions are to be promoted with a view to bring their sentiments and feelings to bear upon the opposite tenets and dispositions of the Members of Parliament." If this unfavourable judgment of the politicians of that day was just, then the more honour is due to him and his colleagues, in their benevolent strife; and it would appear that the religious impress of the Eastern measure was stamped upon it by a pressure from without.

Close by Wilberforce in the House of Commons through this fight of faith, stood Henry Thornton, of about the same age and parliamentary standing—the now almost forgotten, but then the popular member for Southwark. Carrying his religion into politics, he strenuously opposed all bribery and embezzlement, and would not give a guinea per head for votes, or allow banners to be carried before him at his election, according to the fashion of the day. Like Wilberforce, he was of the evangelical type, and he once said to his children: "I had rather have a shake of the hand from good old John Newton than the cheers of all that foolish mob, who praise one, they don't know why." The character of this politician and his

influence over Wilberforce has been graphically sketched by an admiring friend who well knew them both.

"Never hurried, but never idle,—never harassed, but never resting,—moments caught up as well as hours, the workman ever working cheerily under a Father's gracious eye. His rest was to turn from one labour to a different one—to go from the bank to a council of benevolence, from a political discussion to a struggling colony or a school in difficulties. He lays down the pen of the financier to take up the pen of the philanthropist, to write long letters to a harassed governor, to settle differences amongst contending missionaries, to snatch an interval from a dull witness before a Parliamentary committee, in order to write letters, or compose tracts for Hannah More."[1]

Wilberforce often consulted the busy man. He would rush up to him in the House during a debate, gesticulate, and inquire in a torrent of words; an answer would be given, short, clear, luminous—then Wilberforce would retire to his seat, satisfied and at rest.

Another religious and political contemporary, but of a different order, was William Smith, the Unitarian member for Norwich. His image comes before me as he appeared when candidate in an election contest more than sixty years ago. Dressed in court suit, with sword and ruffles, mounted on a chair of blue and white satin, and decorated with blue and white emblems — the Liberal colours for the old city of Norwich—he was carried round the market-place,

[1] *Wilberforce and his Friends*, by Colquhoun, pp. 287, 303.

amidst bands of music and enthusiastic acclamations. The constant friend of civil and religious liberty, he worked in its service with untiring diligence and patience, and having been active in opposition to Lord Sidmouth's bill, he was now not indifferent to the question involved in the East Indian debate. "If I did not," he said, "believe in one iota of the Divine origin of the Christian religion, yet, as a philosopher, I should admire it for the pure principles of morality it inculcates, and I should be anxious to introduce it among the Hindoos, for the purpose of driving from the shores of India that cruel and bloody superstition that disgraces them." [1]

These three members of the House of Commons were chiefs who moved at that time in political-religious business, and took an influential part in reference to the important subjects I have just reviewed.

From altered circumstances, simply religious questions rarely come before the House of Commons in the present day; and when they are referred to, they often produce impatience, or are received with indifference, perhaps contempt. Though the tone of debate seventy years ago was sometimes low enough, religious matters were treated with a remarkable amount of interest; attacks on missionary endeavours being often fierce, and their defence being generally earnest and eloquent. On neither side was the matter regarded

[1] Thornton's *History of the British Empire in India*, vol. iv. p. 246.

with indifference. Evangelical piety was then represented with an ability equal to that displayed by the first politicians of the day. The men I have mentioned —Wilberforce and Thornton—were a match for the Philistines; and it may be questioned whether they have had equal successors in their own line down to the present day.

Passing from the Lower to the Upper House, we meet there with the highest dignitaries of the English Church—some of them scarcely, if at all, known to the historian, whatever might be their private virtues. Amongst the notable occupants of the Episcopal Bench were some whom I have noticed in a former volume. On that Bench might still be seen the learned, eloquent, and imperious Horsley, whose famous sermon in Westminster Abbey was still remembered with admiration.[1] He died in 1806. There still sat John Douglas, author of the *Criterion*, and a friend of Oliver Goldsmith. He had met with strange adventures in his youth, when chaplain to a regiment; and besides defending Christianity, had exposed certain writers of the day, so as to be called, "the scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks."[2] He was now well-stricken in years, and was gathered to his fathers in 1807. There, until a year afterwards, the courtly Dr. Hurd, friend and biographer of Warburton, was accustomed to come from Hartlebury Castle up to town in a grand coach, with a retinue of servants.[3] In the same

[1] See *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 181.
[2] See Goldsmith's *Retaliation*.
[3] See *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 157.

year, 1808, Beilby Porteus passed away. In addition to what I have said of him elsewhere, I may here remark that he was a popular preacher, being to his hearers, like Ezekiel, as one "who had a pleasant voice, and could play on an instrument;" and also a popular author, publishing an *Exposition of St. Matthew's Gospel*, and an essay on *The beneficial effects of Christianity*, as well as a number of tracts on various subjects, including charges to his clergy. Nonconformists united with Churchmen in the praise of this exemplary Bishop. There also at intervals attended, as of yore, Richard Watson, the great apologist, the great sinecurist, and ever declaring himself, the great friend of civil and religious freedom.[1] There also appeared, as late even as the year 1820, the portly form of Brownlow North, of Winchester, by the side of humbler-looking brethren.[2]

Dr. Tomline remained Bishop of Lincoln from 1787 to 1820. I have elsewhere alluded to his *Elements of Christian Theology*, and his *Refutation of Calvinism*, as indicating his dislike of what are termed evangelical sentiments.[3] The former of these works was published in 1799, and ran through a large number of editions, being much commended by clergymen in sympathy with his distinctive opinions; and much censured by a Nonconformist critic,[4] who, however, allowed that it contained "much useful

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[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 178.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 156.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 180, 433.
[4] Dr. Edward Williams.

information." His *Refutation of Calvinism* did not appear until 1811. The answer to it by Thomas Scott, the commentator, in two volumes, never reached the popularity of the book it was meant to answer; but Edward Bickersteth, a well-known critic of the evangelical school, "awards victory to the presbyter." He was translated to Winchester, and died in 1827. Dr. Harcourt, Bishop of Carlisle, from 1791 to 1808, was raised in the latter year to the Archiepiscopate of York, and remained northern primate until the year 1847, thus continuing a prelate for more than half a century.

Dr. Shute Barrington occupied his place till 1826 as Bishop of Durham, his Episcopate being prolonged over thirty-five years, during which period he made no less than twenty appointments to stalls in his cathedral, some of the appointments being worthy of his discrimination. As his revenues were large, so were his charities; and he it is who comes last but one in the long procession of the princes palatine, whose successors were to be shorn of ancient honours belonging to the see.

It is scarcely worth while to notice such a man as John Butler, who died in 1802, and had been translated in 1788 from Oxford to Hereford, except as he affords an instance of party politics becoming a stepping-stone to prelacy. He is described as a vigorous pamphleteer, writing zealously in vindication of the American War, and thus winning favour with the Prime Minister of his day.

Amongst the newer men seated on the right hand of the throne, were a few remarkable for different

qualities. Dr. Burgess was appointed to the see of St. David's in 1803, to be translated to Salisbury in 1825. He was a voluminous writer; a hundred publications of his are enumerated, amongst which the most remarkable are those relative to the genuineness of the authorized reading in the first Epistle of John, the 5th chapter and the 7th verse. The reading abandoned by our revisers in 1881, and abandoned by most scholars at an earlier period, this worthy prelate zealously maintained—a circumstance which involved him in controversy with Dr. Turton. He has been described as resembling "an ancient Father of the Church in simplicity and holiness," and was distinguished alike for extensive learning and unwearied industry, and the unruffled calm of a meditative mind. After establishing, whilst a Welsh Bishop, the seminary at Lampeter for the education of clerical candidates, he endowed the Salisbury Church Union Society, and promoted Sunday-school instruction. Dr. Sutton, previously Bishop of Norwich, succeeded Dr. Moore as primate in 1805. "The days of Archbishops Moore and Manners Sutton were days of great sinecures and of pluralities worthy of the mediæval period," says the last historian of the Archiepiscopal see.[1] But though this be too true, there were points in the character of Manners Sutton worthy of honourable mention. We have seen how he came forward to express liberal sentiments during the debate on Lord Sidmouth's Bill; and in reference

[1] *Diocesan Histories, Canterbury*, by Canon Jenkyns, p. 407.
[2] *Diocesan Histories, Salisbury*, by W. H. Jones, p. 272.

to the repeal of clauses in the Toleration and Blasphemy Acts, as they were called, he claimed, on behalf of the Church, "a tender regard with respect to the religious scruples of individuals"—a claim which will be questioned by many, but which, in his case, could be justified; "and on those principles he had no objection to the passing of the Bill" for the desired repeal. "I had the high satisfaction," says Mr. Aspland, the eminent Unitarian minister, "of hearing him in the House of Lords, in the last debate on Lord Sidmouth's abortive Bill, declare himself broadly against all intolerances, and assert for all Christians the inalienable rights of conscience."[1] Dr. Sutton, however, was strongly opposed to Catholic emancipation. In the same year that he reached the first place amongst spiritual peers, Henry Bathurst succeeded him in the vacated diocese of Norwich. For thirty-two years he ruled the East Anglian see—if indeed rulership could be, without a figure, attributed to one by nature so gentle, and by habit so tolerant of the faults of others. Amongst his clergy were many inconsistent characters, whose lives were a reproach to their profession, and things fell into much disorder throughout Norfolk and Suffolk before the good man's death. But his amiableness, generosity, and catholic spirit won for him the affection of the Norwich citizens; and in later years his venerable appearance was a pleasant picture as people passed him in the streets. I can see now the dignified old man, with his white wig, his shovel hat, his silk apron,

[1] *Memoirs of the Rev. R. Aspland*, p. 277.

his polished leather boots, reaching to the knees, walking arm-in-arm with his drab-coated Quaker friend, Joseph John Gurney, whose conversation he enjoyed, whose hospitable hall he visited. In the House of Lords he took the Liberal side, advocating the rights of Dissenters, and supporting the claims of Roman Catholics; whilst in his cathedral city, he appeared as the friend of unsectarian education, and as a zealous member of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

As a boy at Winchester, his memory was so retentive that he could repeat the whole of the *Iliad* in Greek; and as a young man, when secretary to the first Earl Bathurst, he saw a good deal of David Hume.

Such were the most remarkable spiritual peers, who contributed to the decision of religious questions relating to England and the Indies; and on them rested the main responsibility of administering the affairs of the national Church for many years.

CHAPTER II.

1815–1830.

POLITICAL RELATIONS (*continued*).

BEFORE proceeding to take up the threads of Parliamentary business relative to religious questions at a later date, I pause to notice, first, a Continental incident which excited the indignation of English Protestants; and, secondly, certain incidents in the history of the English Royal family which, in different ways, affected the religious public.

France naturally attracted much attention in this country immediately after the war. Little of the generosity which it is graceful to extend to a fallen foe was, in those days of bitter antigallican enmity, manifested towards neighbours on the other side the Channel; and political hatred was made still more intense by antipathies which, if religious in one sense, were not so in another.

After the restoration of the Bourbons in 1815, persecution burst out in the south of France. Emigrants under the Revolution, on returning to their native country, renewed conspiracies of an earlier date, and

banded themselves against their fellow-subjects of different politics and of a different faith. They demanded that there should be one religion, that the Jesuits should be re-established, and that the Reformation should be suppressed. Roman Catholics in general were not responsible for this movement—many protested against it; and when violence followed, with the perpetration of atrocities at Nismes and other places, humane and liberal priests interposed to shield the victims of intolerance. A recital of what went on was given in the English House of Commons by Sir Samuel Romilly, who said "he should be within the real numbers when he asserted that, in those dreadful scenes, 200 women had been murdered and nearly 2,000 men, and that 350 houses were destroyed." Such reports created a profound sensation in the minds of members, and especially affected those who were zealous Protestants, whatever their denomination; also throughout this country Churchmen and Dissenters were moved by common sympathy for the sufferings of their French brethren. Meetings were convened in consequence, and a large deputation of Nonconformist ministers waited upon the Earl of Liverpool, then Prime Minister, requesting his best offices with the Court of France on behalf of the oppressed. He returned assurances of his own sorrow, and that of the other ministers, for misery endured on the other side the Channel; at the same time he expressed a determination to use efforts for the support of freedom in faith and worship. An appeal was made to British charity. Churchmen and Dissenters responded by contributing a large sum of

money, which was handed over for the relief of French Protestants.[1]

There were public events connected with English Royalty which demand notice in their religious bearings before the thread of Parliamentary proceedings is again taken up.

George III.—who repeatedly suffered from insanity, and whose recovery on one occasion in particular was followed by a memorable religious service in St. Paul's Cathedral, when his family attended with him to give thanks to Almighty God—attained the jubilee year of his reign in 1810. The celebration of it, though described by Romilly in his Journal as "a political engine of ministers," excited general enthusiasm. It produced abundant bell-ringing and many a bonfire, with illuminations according to the style in vogue, where dingy transparencies and thin tallow candles were the only materials at command. There were also civic processions and public dinners, at which loyal toasts were drunk with three times three, and speeches were delivered expressive of devoted attachment to "our glorious constitution in Church and State." Many things contributed to make the old king popular in spite of his infirmities. His hatred of Bonaparte and the French carried with it the sympathies of a large majority, who also admired his domestic virtues, and dreaded his decease, because of scandals clustering round the private history of the Prince of Wales. At the same time, religious people

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[1] De Felice's *Protestants of France*, p. 474, *et seq.*; and Brooks' *History of Religious Liberty*, vol. ii. p. 414.

greatly revered the sovereign for his performance of pious duties and his desire for circulating the Bible; many also rejoiced to hear of his determination to maintain Protestant ascendency throughout his dominions. People who only know George III. as he appears in history in connection with politics and war, can with difficulty conceive of the halo which encircled his brow at the time of his jubilee. Collections were made at church doors in aid of the funds needed for public celebrations; dinners were provided for the poor; religious services were held; sermons were preached; and in the suburb of Kensington, the event was signalised by the foundation of a Sunday school for all denominations, in connection with the Congregational chapel.

A domestic sorrow in the Royal family seven years afterwards, threw the whole country into a state of the deepest consternation by the suddenness of the calamity and the consequences which were anticipated. The Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince of Wales, died immediately after her confinement in 1817. "Without the slightest warning," exclaimed Robert Hall, "without the opportunity of a moment's immediate preparation, in the midst of the deepest tranquillity, at midnight, a voice was heard in the palace—not of singing men and singing women, not of revelry and mirth, but the cry, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh.'"[1] People in the market, in the shop, in the counting-house, and on Change, were struck dumb with grief as the tidings reached them; and

[1] Hall's Works, vol. i. p. 367.

many a family gathered that dismal November day around the hearth to shed tears, as if they had lost a relative of their own. The epithet of "poor man," "poor fellow," applied to the bereaved husband, Prince Leopold, showed in homely expression how the grief of his heart had penetrated their own. Blinds were drawn, shutters were closed, bells were tolled, mourning was put on; and when the funeral took place, at night, in St. George's Chapel, at Windsor, a thrill of real distress ran through thousands and thousands of loyal bosoms. Churches and chapels were draped in black, sermons without number were delivered, both lamenting the national loss, and aiming at the spiritual improvement of assembled crowds. The religious excitement attending the event was perhaps the most striking of all its associations; and it continues imprinted on the memories of old men, like myself, with a vividness which younger folks can scarcely understand.

In the month of January, 1820, an uncle of Princess Charlotte, and father to her present Majesty—Edward, Duke of Kent—passed away, producing an impression on some portions of the religious community by his support of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by his interest in other Christian movements, and by anecdotes, related at the time, respecting his friendly intercourse with certain Nonconformist ministers, in whose religious worship he had, on a few occasions, been known to share. The death of the duke proved a prelude to the departure of his father, who expired six days afterwards, on the evening of the 29th of January, 1820. Of course the lamentations over one

"so full of years, riches, and honour," were different from those poured forth for her whose "sun had gone down whilst it was yet day"; but the mourning was quite as general and quite as sincere. Again, religious people were foremost in expressions of veneration for "the good old king," as they were accustomed to call him. His funeral took place at Windsor, where he died. The rites of the Church of England were performed in St. George's Chapel, with the usual military and civil accompaniments; and on the same occasion the Windsor Dissenters assembled in their humble meeting-house to listen to the worthy minister, who dwelt with characteristic affection on the domestic virtues and pious sentiments of the departed sovereign. He related anecdotes illustrative of his kindly feelings towards Dissenters in general, and towards those of the Royal borough in particular. Traditions of his devout habits, his attendance on domestic worship, and his abhorrence of infidelity, lingered for years amongst the Windsor townspeople; and an aged servant[1] in the household was wont to tell of his master's early rambles, when he would look in upon a bookseller whom he knew, and amuse himself with fresh publications he met with there, until one day he found on the counter a volume of Tom Paine's works, after which his Majesty never entered the shop again.

Public opinion and feeling of quite another kind were evoked by the accession of George IV., whose

[1] I knew this servant, and his nephew related to me the anecdote.

gorgeous coronation in Westminster Abbey took place in the summer of 1820. The trial of Queen Caroline occurred just afterwards, at the end of which the Bill to deprive her of regal titles and prerogatives had to be abandoned by the Ministry from their inability to carry it. A violent controversy arose out of the omission of prayers for the Royal consort in the daily service of the Church of England. Attacks were made on some of the clergy in consequence; libels were printed, followed by law proceedings; and during their progress in court, the most distinguished oratory of the Bar was employed in reflecting upon certain ministers of the Establishment for their conduct in reference to the Royal lady. A trial in the north of England, involving grave censure on some of them, called forth vehement vituperation from Mr. Brougham, then in the zenith of his fame, and immensely popular as the legal adviser of the Queen. She defiantly endeavoured to be present at the solemnity of the coronation, and retiring in bitter humiliation under defeat, she sank under her sufferings. This tragical termination of the conflict could not fail to exasperate more than ever the feelings of those who had called themselves the Queen's friends. Discords in families, and in society, arising out of lamentable events in preparing for the trial, and in carrying it on, are still recollected by a few survivors; and, entering the circles of religious life, they intensified denominational as well as individual feeling, for the Queen's opponents belonged chiefly to the Church, and perhaps her staunchest advocates were found in the ranks of Dissent.

The year distinguished by these strifes was further marked, towards the close, by controversy touching an Education Bill introduced to the House of Commons by the learned gentleman just mentioned—Mr. Brougham. It entered on the domain of religion, because, together with the use of the Bible, it prescribed religious worship and the teaching of the Catechism. It also enforced attendance at church, except in the case of Dissenters' children, who were allowed to accompany their parents on Sunday. They were also to be exempted from obligation to learn the Catechism. The proposed measure contained nothing to which Churchmen could object; but Dissenters were divided in their opinions of its character. Some of them, simply zealous for the advancement of education, were prepared to accept it just as it was, others were disposed to support it with modifications; but an energetic party, foremost in preferring private activity to political power in the service of education, disapproved of the scheme, and vigorously opposed it "as essentially sectarian," as designedly framed "for a single denomination," and "as auxiliary in all its operations to the English hierarchy." In analyzing its details, these opponents, with characteristic susceptibility, "found many provisions which were injurious directly or remotely to Protestant Nonconformists."[1] That Mr. Brougham did not wish to promote the interests of the Church of England at the expense of Dissenters could not but be conceded at the time; but some of the objections

[1] *Memoirs of the Rev. R. Aspland*, p. 427.

made to the measure, were acknowledged by its author to carry considerable weight. The avowed connection of the scheme with the Church of England proved fatal to its success. The Protestant Society and the ministers of the Three Denominations presented petitions against it, and the next session the Bill was dropped after its first reading.

During the sixteen years which elapsed between debates respecting religious matters in 1812, and those which are presently to be noticed as occurring in 1828 and 1829, Episcopal vacancies occurred, some of which were filled up by more than ordinary men. In 1815, Dr. Henry Ryder attained to the see of Gloucester, to be translated to Lichfield in 1824. He was neither very literary nor very eloquent, but an eminently pious man of the devotional and spiritual order, pledged to the interests of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which in those days gave to any one a pronounced character in the religious world. He was esteemed by orthodox Nonconformists and Evangelical Churchmen, though much depreciated in other circles ; and his venerable appearance at the annual meetings of the British and Foreign Bible Society was greeted with hearty cheers. Dr. Herbert Marsh, raised to Llandaff in 1816, and to Peterborough in 1819, was of a different stamp, for he greatly disliked the Society which Dr. Ryder so much loved. He had filled the chair of the Lady Margaret Professor at Cambridge, and had there won high reputation for Biblical learning. His lectures on systematic divinity, and on the principal authors of theological literature, were published by degrees,

and were not completed until he had been seven years a Welsh Bishop; these again were followed by another course, on the authenticity and credibility of the New Testament, and on the authority of the Old, which did not appear until 1840. All critics, however they might differ in their religious opinions, united in bearing witness to the writer's erudition and judgment. But his great forte was Biblical criticism, as displayed in a translation of *Michaelis' Introduction*, with notes, first published in 1801, when few clergymen knew anything of German; thus appearing foremost amongst those who have unlocked for Englishmen, stores of Biblical learning, which have proved of immense value to students of Scripture. At Peterborough, as at Llandaff, he revived the use of the ruridecanal office, and promoted clerical meetings in rural deaneries; adding to all this conferences, in which representatives, cleric and lay, from such deaneries, sat in consultation, with the Bishop as president, for regulating affairs of the diocese. Dr. John Kaye was another scholarly prelate at Bristol from 1820 to 1827, when he was translated to Lincoln. He had been Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, but as a Church historian he is best known to theological readers, who cannot too highly value his elaborate works. His *Justin Martyr*, and his *Clement of Alexandria*, bring out in a perspicuous form the opinions of those early Greek Fathers, as illustrative of doctrines highly prized in the Ante-Nicene Churches of the East; and his *Tertullian*, whilst it admirably helps the reader to understand the tenets of the father and founder of Latin theology, it also

unravels some perplexities created by his adventurous mind, and his crabbed style. Nor should Bishop Kaye's able *Council of Nicæa* be overlooked in connection with the life of St. Athanasius, for it enables an inquirer into that thorny period to thread his way through a great many difficulties, which without such help he could scarcely overcome. I should judge that Dr. Kaye was more a scholar than a pastor, more skilful with the pen than vigorous with the crook; for whilst hearing one extol his mildness and his devotion, I have heard another lament his neglect of diocesan duties. Dr. Coplestone, raised to Llandaff in 1828, had been professor of poetry at Oxford, and provost of Oriel College, where the Common Room became famous for the men who there gathered for conversation—Davison, Whately, Hawkins, and John Henry Newman. If Dr. Coplestone's academic prelections in poetry have gained him reputation for taste, his *Inquiry into the Doctrine of Necessity and Predestination* substantiates his claim to be considered an able theologian. He takes up a modified Arminian position, and in some respects misunderstands Calvinistic standpoints; but he manifests candour throughout his discussion, and keeps in view on one hand the freedom of man, and on the other hand the righteous and merciful dominion of God. He indicates views of the Almighty derived from Archbishop King, who insisted upon the analogical sense of Divine representations; that is, that we are to remember God is not a man as we are, that attributes indicated by names applicable to ourselves do not really exist in Him, but are

employed simply to teach us how practically we are to behave toward Him. These views are by no means satisfactory, but they do not detract from the merit of this remarkable volume in other respects.

The bishopric of Chester underwent important changes in 1824 and 1828. At the first of these periods, Dr. Blomfield, an accomplished scholar, and with capacities for administration such as make a great Churchman, became Bishop of the northern see, to be translated at the second period to the diocese of London—when he was succeeded at Chester by Dr. Bird Sumner, who remained there until 1848. His archiepiscopate will be noticed in its proper place. Dr. Charles Richard Sumner, his brother, librarian and historiographer to George IV., and Dean of St. Paul's, after reaching the episcopal chair of Llandaff in 1826, was transferred to Winchester in 1827, where he continued until his resignation in 1869.[1]

Such men as I have now described were valuable additions to the Bench, and redeem the dignitaries of that period from the indiscriminate censure they have sometimes received. Yet it must be allowed that diocesan efficiency did not in all cases attend on episcopal learning; nor can it be concealed that too many in the high places of the Establishment were destitute of ability and diligence.

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[1] "Numerous are the ministers of our dissenting committees whose sentiments are warmly coincident with my own. At the table of one of them (J. Clayton, jun.), the toast after dinner on Friday last was, 'The health of the newly elected Bishop of Winchester.'" (Letter of congratulation to Dr. Bird Sumner by Mr. Hughes, secretary to the Bible Society.)

I now turn to "a burning question," with which prelates in parliament had to deal.

"The question of the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts had slumbered for nearly forty years." When we remember that these Acts, though still on the Statute Book, had sunk into practical desuetude —that annual measures of indemnity, affording Nonconformists a large amount of relief, rendered the old legislation on the subject almost nugatory—that enactments springing from a spirit of intolerance rife at the Restoration, were no more needful for the security of the English than for that of the Scotch or the Irish Church;—when, moreover, we call to mind the number and variety of offices coming within the scope of these obnoxious laws, excisemen and tide-waiters being exposed to them no less than mayors and aldermen—and when we add to all this the fact that penalties of disobedience included incapacity to act as a guardian or an executor, or to receive what was bequeathed by will; and that punishment might go so far as to involve a five hundred pound penalty—we may well ask, how was it that the repeal slumbered for so long a time? It is one of those questions which arise out of circumstances as common as they are curious, and lead to other questions; namely, on what conceivable grounds resistance or neglect could rest in a matter of such obvious duty and reasonableness; and who were responsible for omitting to do, what not only forty, but a hundred and forty years earlier, most people would admit ought to have been done? The visionary grounds were, that Dissent threatened mischief to

the Church, and, through the Church, mischief to the State; and that municipal and social power could not be safely entrusted to people whose opinions were adverse to a political-religious establishment altogether, or to certain Episcopalian doctrines and observances. As to responsibility for delay, based on such considerations, some would put it on the shoulders of the Church, some on the shoulders of the State, others on the shoulders of both. It is really strange that thoughtful men should talk of Church and State as if they were distinct entities—bodies actually standing apart from one another—two armies with a plain borderland between, drawn up in battle array face to face; whereas a moment's reflection shows that people constituting the Church are also people constituting the State, that they are the same individuals acting in different capacities and sustaining different relations. The people of England in general must be pronounced responsible for the non-performance of duty. The clergy might be responsible for influencing the laity in the support of unrighteous law; but the laity, after all, were law-makers in chief, by virtue of popular representation in Parliament. The people, if so disposed, could have moved in the matter long before. But the truth is, England, during the whole of the eighteenth century, and during a part of the nineteenth, was so absorbed in material and political interests, in mere money getting and money spending, in foreign wars and in self-aggrandizing colonization, that it had little or no idea of abstract justice and national righteousness.

When the question of repeal arose from slumber,

this chiefly resulted from renewed activity put forth by the Dissenting deputies.[1] In 1827, they, in concert with representatives from different Nonconformist bodies, took the matter in hand, with a determination that the business should have a successful issue. William Smith, already noticed, took a leading part in the enterprise; so did Dr. Rees and Mr. Aspland, the elected representatives of the old Presbyterian body in London and the neighbourhood. Ministers of other Nonconforming bodies, Independents and Baptists especially, pushed on the newly inaugurated movement. Lord John Russell was solicited to take the Parliamentary leadership of this crusade; and, accordingly, on the 26th of February, 1828, he rose in the House of Commons to move for a committee of the whole House for the consideration of the Acts of the 13th and 25th of Charles II. The motion was supported by Lord Althorp, Lord Milton, and Mr. Brougham, and opposed, as Sir Robert Peel states in his Memoirs, "with all the influence and authority of the Government recently appointed." Mr. Huskisson resisted the motion without saying a word to vindicate the use of a religious test for the purpose of civil exclusion; and Mr. Peel's[2] chief defence of the law as it stood was, that it had ceased to be operative, and only remained as a sentimental grievance—a sophism in support of injustice which has lasted down to our own days, and has not yet quite expired. Lord Palmerston said that he could not support the pro-

[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 8.

[2] He was not then a baronet.

posed measure, whilst Roman Catholic claims were kept in abeyance—an argument perhaps not to be wondered at from an Irishman, but calculated less to help the latter than hinder the former of two questions both pressing for immediate settlement. A majority of forty-four votes carried Lord John Russell's motion, to the joy of a crowd gathered outside the House. Lord Monteagle, then Spring Rice, took off his hat and cheered until he reached the opposite side of Palace Yard. The noise of the general cheering could be heard at Charing Cross.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Peel, admitted, in a qualified way, that the vote was perfectly decisive, but asked for delay to allow time for members of the Cabinet to consult with each other. The mover of the committee would not agree to delay, but at once proposed and carried a resolution, that so much of former Acts should be repealed as called upon Dissenters to subscribe to certain formularies, and to take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This resolution was accepted without a division, and a Bill quickly followed for effecting the repeal. Upon the second reading, a suggestion was offered by Sir Thomas Acland, that in the room of the old test should be substituted a declaration that a Dissenter entering office would not use his official influence to the injury of the Established Church. The United Nonconformist Committee objected to the declaration as unnecessary and unreasonable, but gave way when they discovered that persistent resistance was likely to endanger the Bill altogether, at the same time stipulating, by a formal resolution, that to declare what

was required, could not be regarded as preventing a Dissenter from using measures for the maintenance of his own ecclesiastical faith.

When the Bill reached the Peers, and was moved to be read a first time, in a speech by Lord Holland, characterized as "irresistible in argument, ingenious in illustration, and abounding in humorous quotation and anecdote," Lord Winchelsea pleaded for an additional declaration, such as should exclude Unitarians, whom he treated as infidels; and Lord Eldon, with his usual honest obstinacy, said he little expected such a Bill as that proposed would ever have been received into their Lordships' House; and he blamed the cowardice of the Church party in the House of Commons. In private correspondence he denounced the measure as "most shameful," "as bad, as mischievous, and as revolutionary as the most captious Dissenter could wish it to be."[1] But, on the Episcopal Bench, the Bill found supporters. The Archbishop of York, Dr. Harcourt—expressing also the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Howley—said that he felt bound, on every principle, to give his vote for the repeal of an Act which had, he feared, led, in too many instances, to the profanation of the most sacred ordinance of our religion. "Religious tests," he added, "imposed for political purposes, must in themselves be always liable, more or less, to endanger religious sincerity." What injustice, injury, and irritation would have been spared had the Bishops at the Caroline era been imbued with sentiments so

[1] Twiss's *Life of Lord Eldon*, quoted by May, vol. iii. p. 160.

reasonable, so wise! The Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Kaye, the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Van Mildert, and the Bishop of Chester (Dr. John Bird Sumner, I believe),[1] supported the views of the northern primate. Upon the Duke of Wellington's declaring that the Bill, in its existing form, received the concurrence of the Government, as adapted to secure the religious peace of the country, whilst affording ample security to the Church, the second reading passed without a division, to the grateful surprise of the public. In committee it passed through a new ordeal. Lord Eldon urged that an oath, rather than a declaration, should be enforced; this, as well as other things of a like nature, fell to the ground; but the wish of Lord Harewood, uttered before the Bill went into committee, took effect, and on a motion by the Bishop of Llandaff, Dr. Coplestone, a clause was added to the declaration, "on the true faith of a Christian." The journals of the House exhibit a protest entered by Lord Holland on this occasion.

When the Bill was returned to the Commons, the amendments of the Lords were discussed, Lord John Russell saying that the words "on the true faith of a Christian" simply meant the faith of the communion to which a person belonged. Mr. Brougham and others thought the alteration objectionable, but it was allowed to pass, and the Royal assent was given on May the 9th, 1828.

The event was celebrated by a public dinner in

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[1] I do not know in what month of that year he was made Bishop.

June, at the Freemasons' Tavern, under the presidency of the Duke of Sussex, who had warmly helped on the progress of the measure. The enthusiasm inspired was talked of long afterwards, and a speech by Mr. Aspland won golden opinions. "The repeal of the Sacramental Test," said that gentleman, "is an earnest of the repeal of other tests, not enacted by the Government, but by corporations, and learned corporations: it is that our country—our beloved country—our mother country—which has dealt rather hardly with us Dissenting children, which has allowed us hitherto only the crumbs of learning that have fallen from her table, will, by-and-by, open her bosom—her maternal bosom—and receive us to her cordial embraces; and that hereafter we Dissenters shall have our fair portion of the children's bread." To this much-cheered sentence Sir Francis Burdett alluded in his speech. "Mr. Aspland said, with a modesty I admired, that they had been only allowed to pick up the crumbs. I think that reverend gentleman showed he had not fed upon crumbs, but that he had been nurtured with the choicest food which the feast of learning could produce."[1]

Catholic relief was almost universally regarded as an inevitable consequence of this measure of repeal. Some regarded it with fear, more with hope. It re-

[1] *Memoirs of the Rev. R. Aspland*, p. 484. To this work I am indebted for several interesting particulars not to be found in Hansard, May, and other general authorities. An old friend of mine present at this famous dinner used to talk much of the display, and would quote Mr. Aspland's remark in more homely words.

quires little thought to discover differences between the two questions. Of Catholic disabilities it could not even plausibly be said that they constituted only a sentimental grievance. They heavily pressed on the political liberties of Roman Catholic subjects ; in this respect they went far beyond what Dissenters had endured. No danger could be reasonably apprehended from the abrogation of the Test and Corporation Acts ; but, looking at the cunning and crooked policy of Romanists, and at principles they maintained, subversive of civil and religious liberty—the operation of which has since been made plain enough by the encyclical of the late Pope—it was not difficult to make out a strong case against conceding the political power then demanded. Memories of the reign of James II., and of "the glorious Revolution of 1688," when Churchmen and Dissenters stood shoulder to shoulder in resisting Popish designs, came in to reenforce opposition on other grounds ; and, moreover, practical difficulties stood in the way of concession, inasmuch as a very strong party in Church and State opposed it with the utmost determination. The King and most of the Royal family had long resisted the change ; and the Duke of York, in presenting a petition from the Dean and Canons of Windsor, produced a sensation throughout the country by declaring he would not change his opinions, in whatever situation he might be placed—words which pointed to the possibility of his succeeding to the throne.

We must here step back to earlier years.

Concessions to Roman Catholics were proposed

immediately after the union between England and Ireland, but they were steadily resisted by George III. as inconsistent with his coronation oath, and Mr. Pitt had to yield to his royal master. The question fell into abeyance; but in 1803 Roman Catholics were exempted from certain penalties and disabilities arising from an Act of 1791. In 1804 agitation arose in Ireland, and in 1805 Lord Grenville presented a petition from that country, and made a speech, which opened the whole controversy. This proved in vain; so did Mr. Fox's efforts in the same year. The Whig ministers in 1806 were no more successful than their predecessors. Then came a decidedly anti-Catholic Administration, followed by unsuccessful petitions and motions on the part of the Opposition. Even the Regency brought no help, though the Prince of Wales had once been favourable to Catholic claims. He now declared himself on the other side. But in 1812 Protestant noblemen, Protestant landowners, Protestant officers (military and naval), even Protestant clergy, united their prayers with those of their Catholic fellow-subjects for an alteration in the laws; yet, in the opposite quarter, resistance was renewed.

That year and the following witnessed the publication of tracts condemnatory of emancipation. Dr. Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln, in a triennial charge to his clergy, contended that the Catholic question derived its whole importance from its connection with the safety of the Established Church—a short-sighted view chiefly calculated to raise another controversy of a different kind. He treated the disabling statutes as pillars and bulwarks, by the breaking down of

which a great gap would be made for the enemy's admission, forgetting that the convictions and affections of the nation are the most effectual safeguards of a national Church. "Protestantism," he said, "was an essential part of the British Constitution; if Papists were invested with power, would they not seek to overthrow the first, and so prepare for the overthrow of the second?" Such was the Bishop's argument. At the same time there were Dissenters who regarded with apprehension what was going on. A Dissenting minister at Bristol—Mr. Thorpe—an eloquent preacher and an influential man, his enormous size being typical of the weight of his character—came forward at public meetings to inquire into the principles and views of different parties who supported Roman Catholic claims. In the Guildhall of the old mercantile city, he, on one occasion, advocated a petition against the agitated claims. His portly form, his incisive voice, his impassioned rhetoric, made an impression on his audience, many of his people following in the wake of their pastor. Of course his arguments were different from the Bishop's. While the Churchman dwelt chiefly on the interests of the Establishment, the Dissenter dwelt chiefly on the interests of the country—alleging that the faithful subjects of the Pope could not be loyal subjects of the King, since an acknowledgment of Rome's spiritual authority involved the maintenance of its temporal power.

The Emancipation Bill of 1813 was abruptly quashed in committee, by an amendment which the Speaker, having left the chair, earnestly moved and

successfully carried. Some partial mitigations of Catholic grievances were afterwards effected, but the main measure did not make way in Parliament, although Mr. Canning, Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Plunket, Irish Attorney-General, were decided in its advocacy.

Meanwhile, and from the beginning of the century, Roman Catholics increased in numbers and influence, and social and political prejudices against them were on the wane. They were free to have places of worship; mass was no longer prohibited. They had colleges where their sons were educated, and convents where monks and nuns could observe without interruption the rules of their respective orders. Stoneyhurst flourished amidst the charming Ribblesdale woods. Driven from Liege by the French Revolution, Jesuits had there settled down on an estate they obtained from an ancient Roman Catholic family; and repairing an old mansion and erecting new buildings, they were masters of an important establishment, and exerted in the neighbourhood a beneficial influence. They did what the old monks did, literally make "the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose." They improved the land, they encouraged agriculture and gardening, and by degrees, through civilizing and benevolent efforts, won over the people of the districts to the profession of Catholicism. Liberal sentiments were expressed at a later period by the authorities; they acknowledged that they were zealous lovers of their Church, but they disavowed all desire to be re-established by the civil power, and to recover their former political pre-

eminence and control. They deprecated the supposed advantage derived from an alliance of Church and State, and preferred to rely on the voluntary principle.[1] Whether such sentiments were general amongst English Catholics at the period to which this chapter relates may be doubtful; but wherever they were uttered, they were calculated to diminish prejudice, and to overcome Protestant reluctance to concession. Mr. Pitt had before received "an explicit assurance from several foreign universities that Catholics claimed for the Pope no civil jurisdiction in England, nor any power to absolve British subjects from their allegiance, and that there was no tenet by which they were justified in not keeping faith with heretics."[2] A liberal Roman Catholic party sprung up in the country before the year 1800, protesting against dogmas hurtful to Catholic reputation. The learned and reverend Alban Butler, author of *Lives of the Saints*, distinctly stated that some divines had thought that, by a special providence, Popes are preserved from error in decisions of faith solemnly published by them with the malign advice of councils, but that this opinion had been denied by others, especially by Bossuet, and also by others of the Sorbonne school. "No Catholic," Butler adds, "looks upon it as an article or term of communion." He little thought that his unchangeable Church would within a century make this which he speaks of as

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[1] See *Howitt's Visits to Remarkable Places*, Stoneyhurst, p. 409.

[2] May, vol. iii. p 107.

undecided, an essential article of the Catholic faith. Mr. Charles Butler, a Biblical critic and historian, became secretary to a committee to attend to Roman Catholic affairs, who proposed a new oath of allegiance protesting against the Pope's temporal authority, and the name of Protesting Catholic Dissenters was adopted by some, though condemned by Dr. Milner, of Winchester. The college at Oscott continued to prosper, and other seminaries in different parts of the land not only served to keep the rising generation in their fathers' faith, but, in different ways, especially through charity and neighbourly kindness, contributed to propagate Roman Catholic tenets. Such an ecclesiastical dignitary as Dr. Milner, and such an accomplished and active layman as Mr. Butler, were valuable auxiliaries, forwarding directly and indirectly the common cause. New chapels rose in different parts of England, worship was celebrated with increasing pomp. Sacred music, carefully cultivated by Catholics when much neglected by Protestants, proved very attractive; and numbers of the latter on high festivals would flock to witness the celebration of mass. Pulpit eloquence has always been studied by members of the priesthood fitted by nature to be orators; and, here and there at least, might be found, even in the first quarter of this century, men who had the power of making a great impression upon their congregations. I remember a Roman Catholic priest in the city of Norwich, between 1820 and 1830, who was a most remarkable preacher, and, on Christmas Day, for example, he would have a large number of Protestants to hear him.

On such occasions he was accustomed to abstain from inculcating Catholic specialities, and to dwell upon the fundamental doctrines of Christianity ; and I can now call to mind an eloquent argumentative discourse which he delivered on the Divinity of our Lord—a discourse listened to and admired by one of the sturdiest Nonconformists in the city. These were all influences quietly preparing for Roman Catholic emancipation.

For years it was treated in Parliament as an open question ; and though members of the Administration were its friends, the majority of his Majesty's ministers, with his Majesty himself, were its enemies. By degrees, however, the disputed claims gained ground. When the Corporation and Test Acts were repealed, Sir Francis Burdett made a motion in favour of Roman Catholics, and the motion was carried by a majority. But it consisted only of six. A resolution based on it was communicated to the House of Lords, who rejected it by a majority of forty-four.[1]

The Clare election in 1828, when Daniel O'Connell was returned, a fear that Roman Catholic soldiers in Ireland could not be relied upon in case of riots, and the activity of the Catholic Association, brought matters to an issue the same year. Mr. Peel declared that a settlement had become a necessity, and his opinion was shared by the Duke of Wellington, Lord Lyndhurst, and the Marquis of Anglesey. Still, George the Fourth stood out, and so did the Bishops. At length the King gave way, though not the Bishops.

[1] May, vol. iii. p. 162.

There were also amongst the Dissenters men no more disposed to yield than the spiritual peers. Lord John Russell in the autumn wrote to Mr. Aspland, the Unitarian minister of Hackney,[1] recommending the presentation of petitions in favour of emancipation; and, in the January of the next year, 1829, the general body of Dissenting ministers met in Dr. Williams' library, Whitecross Street. That dingy old building, long since pulled down, had been many a time an arena of energetic and impassioned debate, perhaps never on such an exciting occasion as this. A large majority favoured the emancipation cause. Mr. Aspland introduced a resolution to that effect, and was followed by the judicious Dr. Winter, of New Court, a successor to the famous Bradbury, who had fought a battle on the other side in the days of William and Anne. Mr. Hughes, the amiable Baptist minister, spoke in favour of the resolution; thus the Presbyterian, as he was called, the Independent, and the Baptist concurred in opinion. But another Baptist rose in opposition. This was Joseph Ivimey, pastor in Eagle Street, editor of the *Baptist Magazine*, a pious and in some respects able man, of great influence with a section of his brethren, but regarded by others as narrow. He urged that it would be unsafe to entrust Roman Catholics with political power; he had no wish, however, he said, to trench on freedom of worship; and he moved an amendment to the effect that it was inexpedient for Protestant ministers to petition Parliament on behalf

[1] *Memoirs*, p. 491.

of Romanist claims. There were Dissenters in many parts of England who sympathised in this view, but the majority differed from them. It was allowed that the grievance was real, that it pressed heavily on a large class of English and Irish men; and it was urged that, whilst unconstitutional and violent acts would place them beyond the pale of political freedom, abstract principles, whatever might be thought of their tendency, ought not to incapacitate peaceable subjects for enjoying rights possessed by others. The dangers which threatened Ireland, in case of further delay, of course influenced Nonconformists as well as Episcopalians.

When parliament opened, his Majesty recommended, in his speech from the throne, that the state of Ireland should be deliberately considered, and the laws which imposed civil disabilities on Roman Catholic subjects should be reviewed. It was to be considered whether the removal of those disabilities could be accomplished consistently with the establishments in Church and State, with the maintenance of the reformed religion, and with the privilege of bishops and clergy within this realm. The Duke of Wellington then announced that the measure contemplated by the Government would remove all civil disabilities under which Catholics laboured, except such as rested on special grounds. Mr. Peel addressed the Lower House to the same effect. The contest at Oxford for a renewal of his seat, necessary in consequence of his new acceptance of office, proved a cause of extraordinary excitement.

Sir Robert Inglis came forward as his opponent.

"There is no such thing now," it was once said to him, "as a Tory." "I beg your pardon," he replied, "I boast myself an uncompromising Tory."[1] He it was who refused Queen Caroline admission to Westminster Abbey at the King's coronation—an unpleasant office, which he discharged with characteristic courtesy. He was a friend of Peel's; and when they were contesting the University seat, they were as attached as ever; at dinner table one would without offence report to the other the progress of busy canvassers. One who was well acquainted with the Tory candidate remarks that those who knew him in later life could hardly realize the slight figure and active form of earlier days; and all the energy and good-humoured wit of which he was possessed, he threw into this memorable election. Oxford for the moment was a battle ground to which all eyes were turned; the cheers of Peel's opponents ran through the country, when it was announced that Inglis had won by a majority of 146. "No Popery," "Church in danger," were party cries; and shouts for Lord Eldon, hisses for the King, and groans for Peel, expressed the triumph of dignitaries and other clerical electors. Peel was glad to accept the borough of Westbury.

Never were the avenues to the House of Commons more crowded than when the doors were opened at six o'clock on the 5th of March, 1829, for the admission of the public—the members being previously called over. Peel then rose and explained his measure. Roman Catholics, on taking a new oath, instead

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[1] *Wilberforce and his Friends*, by Colquhoun, p. 349.

of the oath of supremacy, were to be eligible for all corporate and judicial offices, except those in ecclesiastical courts, and to all political offices, except those of Regent, of Lord Chancellor, in either island, or of Lord Lieutenant in the country of Ireland. Restraints, however, were to be put upon Catholic interference with ecclesiastical patronage, and the insignia of corporations were not to be carried into any places of worship, except such as belonged to the Establishment. Roman Catholic Bishops were not to assume the titles of existing sees; Irish Jesuits were not to be admitted into this country; and the extension of monastic orders was to be discouraged. The motion for going into committee was carried by a majority of 188. The action of Parliament was severely condemned in the country by those who called themselves the Protestant party. "The press overflowed with their indignant remonstrances, and public meetings, addresses, and petitions gave tokens of their activity. Their petitions far out numbered those of the advocates of the measure, and the daily discussions on their presentation served to increase the public excitement."[1]

When the Bill reached the Lords, the Duke of Wellington uttered these telling words: "If I could avoid by any sacrifices whatever, even one month of civil war in the country to which I am attached, I would sacrifice my life in order to do it." The words indicated what was uppermost in the illustrious soldier's mind, and the main consideration which

[1] May, vol. iii. p. 170.

swayed him in his purpose. The Bill was opposed by Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Harcourt, Archbishop of York, by the Archbishop of Armagh, by Van Mildert, Bishop of Durham, and by Blomfield, Bishop of London. But the Bill was supported by Lloyd, Bishop of Oxford,[1] and I think the Bishop of Norwich. The third reading was carried by a majority of 104. Lord Eldon hoped to the last. The King had raised in his mind the idea of final Royal resistance, but the Earl wrote on the 14th of April, 1829: "The fatal Bill received the Royal assent yesterday afternoon. After all that I had heard in my visits, not a day's delay."[2]

As the result of the measure down to 1871, not more than six Catholics altogether represented English constituencies; not more than one was returned for Scotland; and the largest number that came from Ireland did not amount to more than fifty-one. "The total number of Roman Catholic members may be computed at about one-sixteenth of the House of Commons. The Protestant character of that assembly was unchanged."[3]

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[1] Lloyd was succeeded by Bagot in 1829.

[2] *Life of Eldon*, by Twiss, vol. iii. p. 37.

[3] May, vol. iii. p. 176.

CHAPTER III

1800–1830.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

WE have hitherto been occupied with what, to a considerable extent, lies outside the domain of religion, though it often crosses the border. It is time to penetrate into the interior; we leave the affairs of Parliament, the Episcopal bench, the complication of political and ecclesiastical movements, to look at what was going on within the boundaries of the Established Church.

The subdivision of its members into characteristic groups needs alteration from time to time, according to fluctuations in religious opinion. A distinct line may be drawn across the year 1830, up to which time the arrangement of classes must be differently arranged from what is required afterwards.

A large number of English clergymen, during the first thirty years of the present century, were chiefly remarkable for anti-Calvinistic opinions. They were far from being all alike, but in this respect they had much in common. The best amongst them were marked by attachment to Episcopal order, unostentatious devotion, and diligence in parochial duties.

Some, in addition to these characteristics, were further distinguished by eminent attainments in learning.

Dr. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton may be mentioned as belonging to this order. Before he founded his college at Calcutta—before he was elevated to that important see in 1814, the first of East Indian Bishops—he held a rectory in Lincolnshire, a prebendal stall in the cathedral of the diocese, the archdeaconry of Huntingdon, and the vicarage of St. Pancras, London. As early as 1808, he showed the use he made of spare time by a work on *The Doctrine of the Greek Article.* At that period he held the rectory of Bytham. The name of the next Bishop of Calcutta may be coupled with his.

Hodnet Rectory, in Shropshire,—with its bright flower garden, its "green gate," its "park fields," and its heathery walk as far as Stoke-upon-Trent,—has woven round it "memorials of a quiet life," full of spiritual beauty, and familiar to multitudes of readers. There, until 1823, Reginald Heber lived the life of an exemplary clergyman. Though poet, critic, and scholar, he was mainly intent on the fulfilment of his high calling. He preached thoughtful parish sermons on subjects presented in the daily service; and these, when published, won from Southey this high praise: "I am not surprised my brother Henry should think him the most impressive preacher he ever heard." When a zealous missionary spirit had been scarcely kindled in the Church of England, he caught the flame, and shone as a bright example of love to the heathen; and the hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," now so common at missionary festivals in

England and America, was composed to be sung by the Hodnet parishioners, after a missionary sermon by their rector. Talents which might have made him proud, left him humble as a child, ready to reason with the wise, willing to talk with the ignorant; sober-minded, yet cheerful, and not abstracting himself from the "civilities of life, as if sitting to Teniers for a picture of the temptations of St. Anthony."[1] In him self did not seem to be denied, only forgotten. "He was daily amongst his parishioners, advising them in difficulties, comforting them in their distress; kneeling often to the hazard of his own life by their sick-beds; exhorting, encouraging, reproving, as he saw need; where there was strife, the peacemaker; where there was want, the cheerful giver."

Amidst pastoral labours he was loath to leave, he received a call to the new bishopric of Calcutta; and the description of his parting from much-loved friends is a picture worthy of being placed as a set-off against clerical sketches of a different sort. "On Easter Sunday, the whole party went to Hodnet Church, where Reginald Heber preached a beautiful and deeply affecting sermon, in which he expressed his anxiety to partake with his friends for the last time of the Holy Sacrament, which he afterwards administered to them, as 'strengthening that feeling in which alone they would in future be united, till the east and west should alike be gathered, as one fold under one shepherd.'"[2]

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[1] *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, vol. i. p. 19.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 51.

Another example of clerical excellence, though of a different kind, is afforded in the life of Edward Stanley, who, with a lively passion for the sea, by force of circumstances entered the Church. In 1805 he was presented to the family living of Alderley, with a population of about thirteen hundred people. At that time the parish resembled too many others. "The clerk used to go to the churchyard stile to see whether there were any more coming to church, for there were seldom enough to make a congregation." The former rector "used to boast that he had never set foot in a sick person's cottage." The new incumbent soon wrought a great revolution. "His parish was his ship. The same sense of the importance of strict obedience to orders, the same strict requirement of obedience from others, that would have regulated his conduct as captain of a man of war, pervaded his view of the sacred trust committed to him in his parochial cure."

His was a case in proof, that where a man in the first instance feels no inward call to the ministry—a great deficiency indeed, and one not compatible with a profession of being moved by the Holy Ghost—he may, notwithstanding, afterwards enter, with the utmost determination of purpose, upon the responsibilities of his office. This young man came to be called "a Methodist," "for the discharge of duties which would now be deemed too common to deserve notice"—a fact which casts a melancholy light upon a wide portion of the Church of England at that time. He was to the end a staunch supporter of general education; and, as at the end, so at the beginning, he

threw his energies, not only into the secular, but into the religious element, and attached prime importance to the use of Bible reading in National and British schools. His methodical habits were manifested in his visits, and his work; but he was free from formality, nobody was repelled or chilled by coming in contact with the Alderley rector. He won the hearts of parents by caressing the children, and made the hearts of children beat with pleasure, as the echo of his horse's hoofs ran along the village road. The avowed friend of Dissenters, he never treated them as schismatics, never abused them from the pulpit or the press; and the effect of his unsectarian popularity was such that—so his son tells us—"Dissent was all but extinguished." He was certainly no great critic, no great theologian, but he read his Bible attentively, and presented religious truth from the pulpit in popular forms. With something of the inquisitiveness of Gilbert White, he watched the aspects of nature, especially the habits of birds, for he was an accomplished ornithologist, and wrote an instructive book on the subject. A talent for sketching characterized the Stanley family—as a collection of family sketch-books lovingly preserved by the lamented Dean of Westminster abundantly testified—and this, combined with other pursuits, may illustrate the nature of his father's recreations. He had no taste for the hunting field, then a common attraction for country clergymen; he does not appear even to have been fond of going out with a gun; so he became a puzzle to the gentry, and was looked upon as equally good and singular. But he was not without

co-operators in schemes of parochial improvement, for it is mentioned that when "Turner, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, was rector in the adjoining parish of Wilmslow," he entered into them; and the Alderley incumbent, looking beyond his own immediate sphere, gathered a clerical society out of the surrounding villages, in order to promote mutual improvement.[1] A decided Whig—descendant of Sir Thomas Stanley, of Puritan times, who favoured and sheltered ejected ministers[2]—he advocated toleration and reform, and did and said certain things not commended by the clergy in general. With liberality towards Nonconformists, he united a desire for the Relief Bill, described at the close of the last chapter, and in 1829 wrote *A Few Words on Behalf of our Roman Catholic Brethren.* His career as Bishop must be left to another chapter. In the meanwhile it is worthy of notice how memories of him linger in the parish he so much loved. Of this I had a proof a few months since, when visiting the delightful scenes of Alderley Edge, "with here and there great slants of green, rough and projecting rocks, and innumerable fir-trees, glorious oaks and bushes, with paths traversing the whole, and introducing us to deep and sequestered glades that

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[1] See *Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley*, edited by their son, pp. 6, 22.

[2] I have heard his son say that he used with great zest to relate to his family anecdotes of his ancestor's hospitality to Oliver Heywood. Alderley Rectory is a gem in its way, and still preserves abundant mementos of the good Bishop's residence there, as I venture to describe.

in autumn are covered with ferns." I was permitted to drive through the park with its large lake, known as Radnor Mere; and in the avenues and bosky dells could picture the dignified rector, with quick, light step, taking his daily walks to and fro amidst the homes of his parishioners. The rectory is preserved with reverent care, and appears much as he left it; the bird cages which hung in the verandah are gone, but the verandah itself, with its climbing plants, remains the same as it was fifty years ago. The interior is scarcely altered. The rooms retain a look of antique but elegant simplicity, the staircase is still bordered from bottom to top with little pictures of his favourite birds; and the chamber can be identified where Arthur Penrhyn, his world-known son, first saw the light, another where as a boy he used to sleep and to make his study. The garden and grounds are sacredly preserved in their former state, and the church and churchyard contain shrines resorted to by an increasing number of pilgrims. The church in which the rector preached has been restored, and a befitting monument has been raised to his memory. Under a venerable and far-spreading tree lie the remains of his beloved and loving wife, and those of their daughter, Mary Stanley, who devoted herself to a life of benevolence. The present incumbent and his family reverence the name of his predecessor, and treasure up traditions of his exemplary character and life.

Augustus William Hare is another name to be introduced in this place. Though less distinguished as a scholar than his brother, Charles Julius, who

survived him some years, and will require our notice hereafter, yet as one of the authors of *Guesses at Truth*, he appears in honourable literary copartnership; but it is as a country pastor that he comes before us now. His lot fell on the New College living of Alton Barnes, "the most primitive village in Wiltshire, standing on the great treeless plain of corn which occupies the Vale of Pewsey." There, amongst "a few white-washed mud cottages, their roofs thatched with straw, and sheltered by large elm-trees," he commenced parish work in 1829—a work which was cut short in 1834 by his death at Rome, where his grave in the English cemetery is a spot visited by many an English traveller. He had little experience in preaching until he undertook occasional service at West Woodhay, when he was considerably above thirty years old; but there, after a short training, he became master of a simple pulpit style, which must be the envy of every right-minded minister who has read his incomparable *Sermons to a Country Congregation*. He soon found how ignorant, how hard to instruct were the villagers thrown in his way; and, still retaining his literary taste, he made it his study to write faithful, intelligent, and illustrative discourses, such as he hoped the most illiterate would understand. He succeeded well. He never forgot the kindredship of humanity, and the people round his humble parsonage he counted brothers and sisters in Christ. To them he threw open his house and garden; but when, at Alton Barnes, the property of a neighbour was threatened by rioters, he showed himself a friend of order, "at the expense of his popularity for a little

while." Though the temporal good and comfort of his people was near Augustus's heart, far nearer was their spiritual welfare. At his first coming to Alton the greater part of his hearers were so unaccustomed to listen to instruction, or to follow any argument, that his earnestness in the cause of God was the chief lesson which impressed them. It seemed to be the feeling of all, whether they understood his preaching or no, whether they were disposed to profit by it or not, "Mr. Hare does long to save souls"—an impression that of indescribable value, which when once made prepares inevitably for a hundred other precious results. The Alton people wondered at themselves, and wondered at him, exclaiming, "How our minister does grow!"—he goes "more and more on in the Scriptures": almost insensible that they were growing too, and entering more and more into the understanding of what he taught them. "There were few things that made him more angry than to hear people use the expression of 'going too far,' when applied to religion. 'Too far: when shall we go too far in serving and loving God, in being made like Christ?'"[1] "On subjects, both of religion and politics, there was, in the prevailing mind of the age, so much in the one of party feeling and sectarian spirit, and in the other so little of enlarged and sound wisdom looking beyond the expediency of the present moment, and temporal good, that he found it difficult to sympathise in the views of many whom he respected."[2]

[1] *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, vol. i. pp. 293, 298.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 299.

It was observed of him by a neighbouring clergyman: "When I came to reside in Wiltshire, I found that Mr. Hare was my nearest clerical neighbour. I was not at that time acquainted with him, but I had known his character at Oxford as a man of talent and of considerable literary acquirements. I soon became intimate with him, and then found that he was not only an accomplished scholar, but that his heart was in his work as a minister of Christ, and that he had truly devoted his life to the care of those few sheep in the wilderness to whom he had been sent as a shepherd. Like George Herbert, he knew the ways of learning, but declined them for the service of his Master Jesus." [1]

He often preached in a small barn—many holes in the boarding ill-covered with sackcloth—and addressed, at the head of a table, his smock-frocked audience; "his face and figure not unlike those of Mr. Pitt." [2]

Another phase of clerical character of the earnest orthodox class invites attention at Whippingham, in the Isle of Wight, now known all the world over from its association with Osborne and Royalty; but between 1821 and 1826 a place of no importance whatever—its people the world forgetting, by the world forgot. No provision was made for them; they were two miles away from their parish church at East Cowes, and they lived in a condition of godless ignorance. Walter Farquhar Hook, a young man fresh from Oxford—full

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[1] *Memorials of a Quiet Life*, vol. i. p. 303.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 304.

of fun and frolic, and of Shakespeare too—for whose characters he formed a sort of friendship, and talked of them as living beings who came and visited him in his lonely dwelling—undertook the curacy of Whippingham; and, obtaining the use of a large sail-loft, he gathered sailors and fishermen together, with results which gave him much satisfaction afterwards. He conducted two whole services on Sundays, and walked two miles to conduct a third; thus the communicants so increased, that Whitsunday in 1825 became a memorable festival in his ministerial calendar. He was a High Churchman beyond many of his contemporaries, not in the ritualistic, but in the doctrinal sense. With his strong anti-Calvinism, he combined a steady belief in the doctrine of justification by faith; also by the side of his Methodistic fervour, appeared a pronounced and avowed dislike to the distinctive principles and practices of Dissent. He was friendly with everybody, would shake hands all round; but made no secret of his desire to bring everybody over to the Church of England. He looked upon that Church as pure and apostolic, as a branch of Catholic Christendom, as one with the mediæval Church of England, cleansed, as he said, from corruptions—nothing more—its face the same as ever, only washed and made white by the waters of reformation. It was his favourite position, that English Episcopalianism stood distinct and apart from Popery on the one hand and Puritanism on the other; nor had he any sympathy with what is called Erastianism. Whilst still in deacon's orders, he preached a visitation sermon before the Bishop of his diocese,

and he chose for his subject, "The peculiar character of the Church of England independently of its connection with the State." He disliked those whom he called "Puritans" within the Establishment, as much as, perhaps more than Puritans outside; and from the commencement of his career he would have nothing to do with either the Bible or the Tract Society. He had an amusing interview with a deputation from a local branch of the latter, in which he told them to their face, quoting the Fathers in his support, that all things relating to religion in the district must be under his guidance as an authorized minister of Christ. Those who resisted his authority were schismatics. It may be supposed, on reading this, that civility between him and his visitors would come to an end. By no means. "I offered them refreshment," he says, "and lionized them over the garden, and we parted the best friends imaginable." He was young then, but the same kind-hearted man as I found him when Dean of Chichester in his old age. Most hospitable, most genial, most affectionate, he exerted an influence which strangers cannot understand. He will come before us again.

These men, when brought together, are seen to be individually different; with different habits of thought, different measures of learning, different views on certain theological points, different opinions respecting Dissenters, and different relations to religious societies unconnected with the Establishment; yet they were held together by an attachment in common to the national Church—an attachment which was based on different grounds. But in this respect they belong

to one and the same class: they were agreed as to what is generally understood by the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement; and they interpreted the formularies of their own Communion in what may be called a more or less sacramental sense. They insisted on the importance of Episcopalian orders, and on the special value of the Prayer-Book as a confession of faith and a guide to devotion. And in another respect, and that I have now particularly in view, they were beyond their age; they were harbingers of what was to come, they anticipated a spirit of zeal and activity happily prevalent in most Churches now-a-days. In exhibiting their characters it has been necessary to refer to the opposite conditions of clerical and ecclesiastical life around them. They were exceptions to a general rule, but they paved the way for the establishment of another kind of general rule, which, thank God, may be said now practically to obtain.

Of the anti-Calvinistic clergy there was a second subdivision, of which I will give three examples. The subdivision consists of noted schoolmasters. The last of the three caught that spirit of earnestness which had come as a new baptism, preparing for great changes, then at hand. The first of the three I have noticed in a former volume[1]—Dr. Parr, who in the eighteenth century became a man of mark. He lived to the end of the first quarter of the present century, and during that period he became rector of Graffham, in Huntingdonshire, a living in the gift of Sir Francis Burdett. He was also chaplain to

[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi.

Queen Caroline, both appointments being indicative of his relations to the Liberal party. He wished for something far higher.

> "Parr, Lords and Dukes come forward to command;
> But who appears at court the Doctor's friend?
> His books, his riches, and his only rule
> A village pulpit or a country school."

These lines by a rhymster represent public opinion as to the aspirations and disappointments of this remarkable scholar, whose promotion, however, would not have served the highest interests of the Church, any more than would the promotion of Jonathan Swift. But in 1807 Parr seems to have almost reached the foot of an Episcopal throne. "Had my friends continued in power one fortnight longer," he said, when the Whigs had left office, "Dr. Hungerford was to have been translated to Hereford, and I was to have Gloucester. My family arrangements were made." The Spital sermon in 1804 was a great event in Parr's life, and indeed a great event in the history of homiletic literature; for, perhaps, there never was a sermon published which attracted so much attention, and called forth so much criticism. It formed the subject of the first article contributed by Sydney Smith to the *Edinburgh Review*, where Parr was pronounced to be more remarkable for learning than originality; and long afterwards it was described in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, as "the most empty bladder-dash that ever attempted to soar without gas into the ethereal regions." Dr. Parr was not a specimen of the "good minister of Jesus Christ"; but his immense learning and his bold politics made

him much talked about; and the notes, twice as long as the sermon, ranging over all sorts of topics, invited controversy, especially from William Godwin, a writer of rising fame, whose *Political Justice* was attacked by the Spital preacher. A far better specimen of the clerical schoolmaster, combining the study of theology with classical pursuits, was Dr. Valpy, for more than fifty years head master of Reading Grammar School. He did not die until 1836, and in his long life he published elementary educational works in Greek and Latin. At the same time he sent out a number of pupils who vied with each other in honouring their master, the best known amongst them being Justice Talfourd, a favourite who never seemed tired of singing the old man's praises, as the prince of schoolmasters. Valpy was a pious man, and some of his sermons he published for the edification of parishioners, of whom he had the charge as well as of the grammar school.

But all the clerical schoolmasters of his day were eclipsed by Dr. Thomas Arnold, who to his zeal as a reformer of education, added zeal as a reformer of the Church—indeed, as a reformer of everything needing reformation. His clerical life—which began at the pleasant little village of Laleham, close to the Thames, near Staines, endeared to his memory through after-days—marks an era in the history of the Church of England which will attract more and more attention as time rolls on; for he was one of those master-spirits that are able to inspire contemporaries and successors. It is comparatively easy to instruct and interest, but few can *inspire:* Arnold did; and

through men who came under his influence at school, a tide has risen in the Church, and still steadily flows on, with issues in the distance which posterity only will be able to estimate. He had learning, and devoted himself with enthusiasm to historical study, under the guidance of Niebuhr; yet not for his learning, nor for moral and religious power exerted in school and Church, will his name be most memorable in future days. He had indeed religious earnestness, such as distinguished the men first described in this chapter, and he might have truly said to the Searcher of hearts, "the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up," but as an apostle of reform he had few who were at all like him. No doubt his schemes were Utopian; he had an idea of Church and State being identical—a dream to be classed with the visions of Plato, of More, and of Harrington. But pervading the dream is a holy desire to have Englishmen thoroughly Christianized, to have England made a kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. His love to the Redeemer was at times really ecstatic; and a longing to see his fellow-men at the feet of that Blessed One was with him a consuming passion. "In that unknown world," he said, "in which our thoughts become instantly lost, still there is one object on which our thoughts and imaginations may fasten, no less than our affections: that amidst the light, dark from excess of brilliance which surrounds the throne of God, we may yet discern the gracious form of the Son of man." "Providence, the Supreme Being, the Deity, and other such terms, repel us to an infinite distance;" "our God is Jesus Christ our

Lord, the image of the invisible God;" "in Him is represented all the fulness of the Godhead, until we know even as we are known." That idea filled his soul, and covered the field of devotional and practical life. With Arnold's occupation as a private tutor at Laleham, he united religious duties in the neighbourhood. "Without undertaking any direct parochial charge, he was in the habit of rendering constant assistance to Mr. Hearn, the curate of the place, both in the parish church and workhouse, and in visiting the villagers, thus uniting with his ordinary occupations greater means than he was afterwards able to command of familiar intercourse with his poorer neighbours, which he always so highly valued." There, in "favourite views of the great plain of Middlesex, the lonely walks along the quiet banks of the Thames, the retired garden with its 'Campus Martius,' and its wilderness of trees, which lay behind his house," he nurtured those thoughts which found after-expression in deeds as well as words. "In many respects his method at Laleham resembled the plan which he pursued on a larger scale at Rugby. Then, as afterwards, he had a strong sense of the duty of protecting his charge, at whatever risk to himself, from the presence of companions who were capable only of exercising an evil influence over their associates; and, young as he was, he persisted in carrying out this principle, and in declining to take any additional pupils, as long as he had under him any of such a character whom yet he did not feel himself justified in removing at once." Not a large income, not noble patronage, not even

the highest intellectual culture, was the object of his ambition, but the moral and religious character of the boys, so that they might become good citizens and good Christians. If a like ambition now possesses the minds and hearts of English schoolmasters, it is largely through the influence of Thomas Arnold. And, looking beyond the school, into the state of society around him, he had apprehensions worthy of being noted well. They are thus expressed: "I fear the approach of a greater struggle between good and evil than the world has yet seen, in which there may well happen the greatest trial to the faith of good men that can be imagined, if the greatest talent and ability are decidedly on the side of their adversaries, and they will have nothing but faith and holiness to oppose it. Something of this kind may have been the meaning or part of the meaning of the words, 'that by signs and wonders they should deceive even the elect.' What I should be afraid of would be, that good men, taking alarm at the prevailing spirit, would fear to yield even points they could not maintain, instead of wisely giving them up and holding on where they could."

Arnold desired to see some leading periodical taking a decidedly religious tone, unconnected with party feeling. "It would be delightful to see a work sincerely Christian, which should be neither High Church nor what is called Evangelical."[1] In that sentence a key is found to the character of Arnold's

[1] The foregoing extracts are from the second chapter in Stanley's *Life of Arnold.*

religious teaching. But he could scarcely be called a scientific theologian. He does not seem to have been largely read in the history of opinions; he had his prejudices, and did not correctly estimate the worth of authors, or the best points in their varied systems; yet he was eminently *religious* in all his preaching and in all his writing. The first volume of his sermons, published just after leaving Laleham, and therefore a specimen of his preaching whilst resident in the village, afford specimens of the way in which he exhibited gospel truth. They do not correspond with either of the great theological schools of the day; but I must say, after a renewed perusal, that, with some vagueness, some defects, they exhibit distinctive aspects of revealed redemption, of Christ's mediation, and of the Spirit's work, most refreshing to anybody who knows and loves the gospel of our Saviour.

The Bampton lecturers for many years fairly represented the anti-Calvinists of the Church of England, combining a large amount of learning with characteristic orthodoxy. They include several distinguished names. George Stanley Faber, master of Sherburn Hospital and prebendary of Salisbury, delivered a course in 1801, on the authenticity of the Pentateuch, exhibiting other remains of ancient literature, as corroborating the history of Moses. The lectures were much praised then and afterwards; but, of course, they are deficient in those lights which subsequent criticism and research have shed over the subject. He wrote on the origin of pagan idolatry and on the interpretation of prophecy; and amongst his works a

book on the difficulties of infidelity, published in 1824, is of pre-eminent value. Richard Laurence, afterwards Archbishop of Cashel, occupied the post in 1804, with an attempt to illustrate those articles of the Church of England which he said the Calvinists improperly consider as Calvinistical. This was to plunge into a thicket of controversial thorns, where the reader will not expect me to follow him; but I may be permitted to say that, with what appear to me to be misapprehensions of the views he criticised, he furnished, particularly in copious notes to his volume, a large body of valuable information touching the history of opinion relative to justification and predestination. Edward Nares was lecturer in 1805, on the evidences of Christianity; and, according to Archbishop Magee, he produced a work compared with which, perhaps, no other brings within the same compass "so much argument to bear against the various enemies of our religion from without, or against the betrayers of it from within." Richard Mant, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, delivered the Bampton lecture in 1812, in answer to the charge, alleged by Methodists, that the gospel is not preached by the national clergy; but a much more useful work, though bearing signs of strong Church predilections and of dislike to Romanists and sectaries, is Mant's history of the Church of Ireland. It is perhaps the best supply we have of a great want in that branch of ecclesiastical literature. Further, in connection with Dr. D'Oyly, he prepared an annotated Bible, compiled from one hundred and sixty authors; and the compilation really forms a library of Divinity:—on the

Deity and Atonement of Jesus Christ, on the personality and offices of the Holy Spirit it is particularly full. William Van Mildert, made Bishop of Llandaff in 1819, discussed, a few years earlier, the general principles of Biblical interpretation, he having before published the Boyle lecture on the rise and progress of infidelity—a book said to be chiefly valuable for the literary information supplied in the notes. Reginald Heber, whilst still incumbent of Hodnet, produced a series on the personality and offices of the Christian Comforter. More renowned as a poet than a divine, it does not seem that he appears to great advantage in this production. It was praised in some quarters; but in the estimation of a critic belonging to the Evangelical school, it was, though very learned, not so experimental and devout as could be wished. "There are beautiful views of the subject combined with some speculative and fanciful notions."[1] His literary qualities were warmly eulogized by Lord Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*.

In 1822 a lecturer followed who as a teacher, in originality and influence, surpassed his predecessors. This was Richard Whately, destined to fill high office in the Irish branch of the Established Church. His subject was characteristic—the use and abuse of party feeling in matters of religion—and, in treating it, he handled the nature and uses of party feeling. Party spirit he described as consisting in a preference of ends to means, of over-readiness to form parties, and of uncandid partiality. He speaks of allowable

[1] Bickersteth's *Christian Student*.

differences among Christians, of Christian conduct towards opponents, the avoidance of foolish and unlearned questions, and the conduct which should be adopted towards Dissenters. He considers schism as one of the appointed trials of the Church, which the clergy and the laity are bound to oppose; but he urges the duty of conciliation, not overlooking the sinfulness of schism because the law wisely tolerates it, nor yet resorting to any secular means of promoting conformity. No one could be a more zealous upholder of the Established Church than he was, though in some of his publications—his *Kingdom of Christ*, for example—he actually maintains principles akin to those of dissent. At the same time, he strongly condemns Church divisions—counselling moderation and caution against extremes, and pointing out difficulties and encouragements in pursuing the unpopular course which he recommended. The whole discussion supplies in a measure, with some serious drawbacks, a vacant niche in literature touching the ethics of controversy—a subject then and still sadly neglected by earnest theologians. To these Bampton lectures succeeded a series of essays, on *The Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, *The Dangers to Christian Faith*, *Difficulties in the Writings of St. Paul*, and *The Errors of Romanism*. The First of the series related to the revelation of a future state, in which he broached views such as he expounded in parochial sermons on the same subject—for he was addicted to self-repetition. He also dwelt on the manifestation of God in Christ, on love for the Saviour as a Christian motive, and on other practical themes, closing the

whole with an essay on the omission of a system of articles, liturgies, and canons, and indicating advantages which accrue from the omission, and which are not such as would commend themselves to Anglo-Catholics. The Second exhibited dangers resulting from injudicious preaching, from neglect of instruction in Christian evidences, and from an erroneous imitation of our Lord's teaching. The Third dwelt on difficulties in St. Paul's writings, particularly in reference to election, perseverance, the abolition of the Mosaic law, and imputed righteousness. He regarded election as appointing privileges, and benefits, not as forming character; and, on the same principle, instead of believing that there is an imputation of the righteousness of Christ's life to those who accept the gospel, he believed in a provision made by the gospel for a righteousness like Christ's in the lives of His followers. The Fourth book on Romanism, treated of superstition, vicarious religion, pious frauds, and undue reliance on human authority, also of persecution, and of trust in names and privileges as distinctive and reprehensible traits of the Romanist system.

For plainness of style and shrewdness of sense, he may be compared to Archbishop Tillotson; but in cleverness of insight, ingenuity of illustration, and pointedness of argument, Whately surpassed the prelate of the Revolution. He looked at his subjects in a dry light, and examined them with wonderful sagacity; but John Stuart Mill touches the truth when he says that Whately was "endowed with a penetrating and active, rather than a patient and persevering intellect, seldom failing to cast his sounding

line to a greater depth than his predecessors, and, when he has done this, he scarcely seems to care whether he reaches the bottom or not."[1] Dr. Whately was wonderfully lucid both in thought and expression. Sometimes one can hardly help smiling at the transparency of his ideas, and the aptness of his diction. This may be owing to his not going down further than he did ; but if, as John Stuart Mill thinks, he failed to sound the depths of a subject, he certainly saw to the bottom of the stream running through his own mind, which is more than some authors do. Nobody knew better than he how to hit a nail on the head. He could deal in irony with a masterhand, as he showed in his *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon*, by which he cleverly demolished much of the higher criticism of history then coming into vigorous play. His was the very kind of intellect which produces popular teaching ; and, for many years, Whately was eminently popular, his works running into numerous editions. The current, however, which carried these productions on the top of the wave, has since set in a different direction. What Whately was as a man, and what he accomplished at Oxford, may with advantage be deferred till we come to notice what was going on in that university.

After Whately, in the list of lecturers, comes John Josias Conybeare—not to be confounded with his namesake, Dean of Llandaff, rich in geological fame, or with his son, joint author with Dean Howson of *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul.*

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[1] Mill's *System of Logic.*

Conybeare's lectures in 1824, on the interpretation of Scripture, do not appear to have attracted much attention, though they are spoken of as instructive. They were exceeded in interest and influence by Henry Hart Milman's course in 1827, on *The Character and Conduct of the Apostles considered as an Evidence of Christianity.* This was not a production of great theological power, or in itself productive of any remarkable religious effect, but its literary merits could scarcely fail to be considerable, seeing that the author had before achieved high reputation as a poet. As a historian, perhaps he reached a still loftier height. His *History of the Jews* made a new epoch in that branch of literature. His aim, as described at the time, was to write, not a theological, but a civil and military account of a people perfectly unique from beginning to end. He followed their ancient story and took up the tale of their persecutions in later times. There was a freshness in his style of treatment quite novel; and the adoption of modern phraseology relative to Abraham and Moses, now familiar enough, struck many at the time as irreverent, and as desecrating the inspired annals. Indeed, some went so far as to say that in what he wrote, the miracles of the Old Testament, and all that is supernatural and impressive, disappear. This was an unfair stretch of criticism, though the work was open to the charge of serious defects. Looked at now in the light of later literature belonging to the same department, it is seen to be the opening of a new school of Jewish studies, in which the founder of a free criticism is far outstripped by his followers, some of

whom the author could not have approved. His *History of Christianity* down to the fall of Paganism, did not escape attacks from those who deplored the progress of rationalism; but this circumstance was very much the result of prejudice. He writes with moderation, yet with reverence ; and however a reader may differ from some of his conclusions, and fail to admire his style, all must appreciate his research, his ability, and his power of description. His *Latin Christianity*, as to literary merit, in the judgment of qualified persons, rises above that of the preceding histories ; and it is unnecessary to say it takes a rank in letters from which it is not likely to be displaced. It may be added, that Milman's reputation to the last was more that of a scholar and man of taste than a divine ; and his social merits still more exalted him after he became Dean of St. Paul's.

Burton's lecture on the Heresies of the apostolic age (1829) is by common consent taken as a text-book for those who attempt to thread the mazes of that winding and bewildering path. The depth and breadth of his patristic learning is acknowledged by all competent to form a judgment of the work ; and the same high qualities, as a record of ancient opinions, may be found in his *Ecclesiastical History of the First Three Centuries.*

The lecture for 1830, by Mr. Soames, consisted of an inquiry into the doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church, in which, with abundance of learning brought out in a dreary style, his zeal on behalf of his own Church is conspicuous ; and the same may be said of his *History of the English Reformation*, published just before.

I may add two more names of diligent labourers in Biblical study, whose works were wells of knowledge, out of which many since have filled their vessels to the brim. I allude to Bloomfield, vicar of Bisbrook, whose *Recensio Synoptica*, published in 1826, occupied many a library shelf, preserving the annotations of Wettstein, with much critical matter from other sources, altogether undigested and ill-arranged. I allude also to Thomas Hartwell Horne, who by his useful Introduction to the Scriptures laid general readers under great obligation. Mr. Horne served the Church by numerous other works. He laboured diligently for many years as a librarian in the British Museum. Genial and communicative, "courteous in manners, and good-natured in his actions, especially mindful of younger men," he was ever ready to impart "his large stores of information." This testimony from one of his associates, I can corroborate from my own observation, when nearly fifty years since the good man, in clerical hat and characteristic costume, was ready at any moment to offer advice and to make suggestions.

There were clergymen of another type, who addicted themselves to literary occupations of a different kind. Down in the retired village of Welford, on the picturesque banks of the river Wye, lived Thomas Dudley Fosbroke, a born archæologist, who, after writing a poem on *The Economy of Monastic Life as it Existed in England*, produced, at the beginning of the century, a book on the different Conventual orders. The materials were gathered out of Du Cange and other erudite authorities, and the whole was put to-

gether so as to win praise from no less a critic than Walter Scott. Gloucester and Gloucestershire, the scenery of the Wye, the records in Berkeley Castle, and the topography of Cheltenham, subsequently employed the facile and pleasant pen of this writer; but his most important work is the *Encyclopædia of Antiquities*, in which he revels amidst manifold kinds of curious learning which could be commanded at that time. But the book now is seen to be unsatisfactory, and is almost superseded by modern researches. He was an enthusiastic Freemason, chaplain of the provincial Grand Lodges of Hereford, Monmouth, and Gloucester—a kind of office characteristic of several clergymen in his day. Whilst distinguished only as an antiquary, he did not altogether neglect Biblical studies, to instruct his parishioners. The name of Thomas Dunham Whitaker—not to be confounded with John Whitaker, who wrote on the antiquities of Manchester many years before—may be coupled with that of Fosbroke; but he composed much more profound and elaborate works than his contemporary did. Whitaker's histories of Whalley and Craven, of Leeds, of Wharfdale, and of Richmondshire, took from the first a high place in literature of that description, and keeps it still. In these works, the author's "prejudice in favour of gentle blood, and in derogation of commercial opulence," is noticed by a critic in *Blackwood's Magazine;* and that feature in his character, it may be remarked, found a strong resemblance in others of the clerical brotherhood.

Neither of the last two named clergymen manifested any sympathy with the Calvinistic class; but I am

not aware that they ever assailed the tenets of the Evangelical school. Indeed, they were too absorbed in antiquarian researches to enter the domain of theological polemics; but there was one man of letters amongst English incumbents—an original poet, and really a kind-hearted person—who, in his verses, did not scruple to manifest his dislike to Evangelical teachers in parish pulpits. George Crabbe, in his *Parish Register*, gibbets not only the old-fashioned, sleepy parsons, who thought more of collecting tithes than of converting souls, but he lashes with severity a youth from Cambridge, who—

> "did much his sober hearers vex,
> Confound the simple, and the sad perplex,"

by dwelling on the sovereignty of Divine grace, after a fashion which the bard grievously caricatures. He represents this preacher as lamenting on his death-bed "his moral rags," and the spotted righteousness of his alms-deeds; and then, by a stroke of cruel satire, Crabbe introduces an admiring sexton, who says to his reverend master,—

> "Your faith's your prop, nor have you pass'd such time,
> In life's good works, as swell them to a crime."

Another literary clergyman—not a poet, but a critic, distinguished more by wit than theological learning and wisdom, much more at home in writing clever and cutting reviews than in preaching the gospel of salvation—unmistakably manifested his dislike of all Evangelical divinity, but especially pointed his arrows at missionary efforts. The *Edinburgh Review* was a bow with which Sydney Smith shot abroad the

contents of his quiver, amidst cheers from those who not only admired the skill, but unhappily sympathised in the aims of the marksman. There was an animus in his attacks on Methodistical doings not found in slashing articles respecting poetry and politics.

One more literary clergyman may be named, and he furnishes an example of our forgetfulness respecting local associations in the case of authors. James Grahame, who wrote the *Sabbath*, was a Scotchman, brought up to the bar, and his clerical office is often overlooked ; but, when we recognise it, we are apt to think of him as occupying a manse on the north side of the Tweed. But in fact, tired of Presbyterian courts, Grahame crossed the river, and entered the Episcopal Church, seeking ordination in 1809 at the hands of the Bishop of Norwich, who was more willing than some prelates to ordain men not trained at Oxford or Cambridge. Grahame held a curacy in Gloucestershire, and one afterwards in the county of Durham. The *Sabbath*, however, was a Scotch production, before he took English orders. The peculiar reverence for that day, expressed in this pleasant poem, was eminently characteristic of pious clergymen in both countries at that time ; and Campbell, the poet, relates that he and Grahame once ascended Arthur's Seat to watch a sunrise, and afterward, on returning home, retired to rest, when he heard his friend singing a hymn, "with a power and inspiration beyond himself," before he fell asleep. "The remembrance of his large, expressive features, when he climbed the hill, and of his organ-like voice

in praising God, is," says Campbell, "yet fresh and ever-pleasing in my mind."

It is unnecessary to enlarge this list any further. Enough has been said to illustrate the employments of a large number of clergymen who flourished during the first thirty years of this century; and I should be thankful if it were not necessary to add that there were others who pursued habits of a kind which reflected no credit on the Church to which they belonged. Careless about their parochial duties, chiefly addicted to field sports and fashionable gaieties, they expressed their religion most frequently in a condemnation of Calvinism and Methodism, without having perhaps any distinct idea of the difference between them. All this would be blame enough, but a far more emphatic strain of censure is called forth by cases of clerical scandal, now happily uncommon, but fearfully frequent fifty years ago. It is only needful to say that up and down the country there were plenty of clergymen who, adhering steadily to old-fashioned beliefs and practices, were of irreproachable moral life—Christian gentlemen in their way, but untouched by spiritual fervour. Some clergymen, unknown to history, had great influence. Norris, rector of Hackney, was a pre-eminent example, for he was called the "Bishop-maker," from his being often consulted by Prime Ministers when sees fell vacant, none of which, it is said, to the credit of his disinterestedness, would he accept himself; he was also a High Churchman, and not at all popular with the Hackney Dissenters. However unfavourable things might be in some quarters during the first quarter of

this century, they were not so bad as in the days of Anne and the first two Georges; and such a dark description of the clergy as would be only just in reference to those earlier times, would be decidedly unjust if employed to represent the clerical world during the later years of George III.

A kind of preaching common in the early part of this century has been thus described by a clergyman:

"Persons are now living who can remember a curate hunted from a metropolitan pulpit because it was his custom to raise his eyes from his manuscript. Persons who have not long been dead could recollect the discourse delivered by a dignitary in the parish church of St. Giles, and addressed to three classes—the good, the bad, and the indifferent. The good were told they needed no advice; let them persevere in their righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven would be their reward. The bad—but in such a congregation (St. Giles!) it was uncharitable to suppose that such a class could be found. The indifferent lost much by not exerting a little more energy, in order that their reward might not only be rendered more certain, but more brilliant. And this theology occupied in its enunciation exactly five minutes! In the same pulpit, on another occasion, a preacher of the like stamp took for his subject the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. 'It was said,' he observed, 'that if any of our fellow-creatures should so fall, as to stand in need of such a degrading confession as the Publican's, let his hearers be on their guard, lest, by drawing too favourable a contrast between such outcasts and themselves, they incurred the censure pronounced on that otherwise estimable character, the Pharisee.'"[1]

[1] Neale on *Mediæval Preaching*, p. 15. "An anecdote, lately told in the life of a Dissenting minister, has a fair claim to the

There is one characteristic which pertained more or less to such clergymen as I have described—they had a great dislike to religious excitement. It was a prominent feature, making a family likeness. They do not seem to have had a distaste for other kinds of excitement, especially that which is political. "Tory parsons" were words in the mouths of Liberals all over the country, and the idea of country rectors and vicars canvassing farmers, and leading them to the poll booth, was in everybody's head on the Whig side; the Tories also could point to distinguished "Whig parsons," who by pen and voice, private influence and public advocacy, strove hard to break down the ascendency of the opposite interest.

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admiration of every priest who is in earnest. There was a minister named ——, who, it appears, had obtained no small reputation among his brethren for his eloquence generally, and more particularly for the logical sequence, and most of all for the impressive conclusions, of his sermons. On some great occasion he was appointed to preach (it was in the open air), and he had deeply interested his auditors through a long discourse. Just before the conclusion, he was observed to hesitate, and then, in a rambling manner, he recapitulated part of what had been already said, until he reached a very lame and impotent finale. At the subsequent dinner, when the preacher's health was proposed, 'Brother,' said one of the ministers present, 'we must all, I am sure, have been charmed by your discourse; but, if I may hazard the observation, I thought that, at the conclusion, you lost the thread of your argument, and hardly equalled your ordinary excellence.' 'If I must tell you the reason,' was the reply, 'thus it was. Just as I was about to conclude, I saw a poor man running up to the place, hot and dusty, eager to hear. "Speak a word to him," said Conscience. "You will spoil your sermon if you do," said Pride. And I *did* spoil it, I know, but I may have done him good.'"

Probably, on both sides, these notions exaggerated facts, but there must have been a large amount of party spirit at work to give rise to such tales. Yet all this time, fires of excitement appropriate on electioneering altars were not to be lighted in temples of religion. Everything, it was thought, must be done most sedately and without fervour in the cathedral, the chapel of ease, and the parish church. Excitement there was enthusiasm, and enthusiasm meant Methodism, and Methodism had long been an object of horror. Methodists were a sect everywhere spoken against. Orthodox Churchmen, as they saw chapel after chapel rising in town and village, exclaimed with surprise: "These that have turned the world upside-down are come hither also!" To allow anything of that sort to creep into the Church was to admit an enemy, and to prepare for a surrender of the orthodox citadel. So, in preaching, in singing, in social intercourse, in benevolent organization, everything with a Methodistical look was prohibited. Overmuch earnestness in the pulpit, especially if the speaker had not his sermon on the cushion before him; a hymn or a tune popular at "the Tabernacle"; religious conversation and prayer approaching even to a faint resemblance of a Wesleyan class meeting;[1] and popular public meetings on behalf of the two great Church societies, with warm, heart-stirring appeals, and now and then notes of applause, were things not to be thought of. They were vulgar dissenting peculiarites—signs of fanatical extravagance,

[1] Dr. Hook, when vicar of Leeds, was an exception.

unbecoming respectable Christians. When any practices of a Puritanical order were adopted by Low Church Evangelicals, they were regarded as proofs of incipient nonconformity, as paving pathways down to the conventicle door, as training up recruits for the regiments of John Wesley and George Whitefield.

As to the general condition of the Church in that wide circle left untouched by "Evangelical" influences, I cannot do better than quote the following passage written by an author who has had ample means of judging what went on.

"It was orthodox without being theological. Doctrinal problems were little thought of. Religion, as taught in the Church of England, meant moral obedience to the will of God. The speculative part of it was accepted, because it was assumed to be true. The creeds were reverentially repeated, but the essential thing was practice. People went to church on Sunday to learn to be good, to hear the commandments repeated to them for the thousandth time, and to see them written in gilt letters over the communion table. About the powers of the keys, the real presence or the metaphysics of doctrine, no one was anxious, for no one thought about them. It was not worth while to waste time over questions which had no bearing on conduct, and could be satisfactorily disposed of only by sensible indifference. As the laity were, so were the clergy. They were generally of superior culture, manners, and character. The pastor in the *Excursion* is a favourable but not an exceptional specimen of a large class among them. Others were country gentlemen of the best kind, continually in contact with the people, but associating on equal terms with the squires and the aristocracy. The curate of the last century, who dined in the servants' hall, and married the ladies' maid, had long ceased to exist. Not a specimen of him could

have been found in the island. The average English incumbent of fifty years ago was a man of private fortune, the younger brother of the landlord perhaps, and holding the family living; or it might be the landlord himself, his advowson being part of the estate. His professional duties were his services on Sunday, funerals and weddings on week-days, and visits when needed among the sick. In other respects he lived like his neighbours, distinguished from them only by a black coat and white neckcloth, and greater watchfulness over his words and actions. He farmed his own glebe; he kept horses; he shot and hunted moderately, and mixed in general society. He was generally a magistrate; he attended to public meetings, and his education enabled him to take a leading part in country business. His wife and daughters looked after the poor, taught in the Sunday-school, and managed the penny clubs and clothing clubs. He himself was spoken of in the parish as 'the master'—the person who was responsible for keeping order there, and who knew how to keep it. The labourers and the farmers looked up to him. The 'family' in the great house could not look down upon him. If he was poor, it was still his pride to bring up his sons as gentlemen; and economies were cheerfully submitted to at home to give them a start in life—at the university, or in the army or navy."[1]

It is scarcely needful to remark that the class of Churchmen described in this chapter occupied leading positions in the Establishment. Bishoprics, deaneries, and prebendal stalls almost entirely belonged to them. At the same time, they included such laymen as stood in the front rank of learning and authorship,

[1] Papers by J. A. Froude, in *Good Words* for 1881, p. 20.

art and science. Almost all the nobility, with other great landholders, so far as they made any profession of religion, pertained to the same party. A strong line of social distinction existed between them and the Evangelicals, who came nearest in rank and riches ; and this proceeded from a want of sympathy, not only on the one side, but on the other also. The old-fashioned aristocrats who stood up for Church and King, looked with suspicion upon "the Methodists," and shrank from them as tight-laced Puritans ; whilst the latter looked on their prejudiced neighbours as worldly, and ignorant of spiritual religion. If the former stood aloof from Evangelicals in the Established Church, they stood further off from the Evangelicals of Nonconformity ; between the ministers of the two sections there was a wide gulf, rarely crossed.

There are two institutions which were supported by anti-Calvinistic clericals, and which were closely connected together. The Society for Propagating the Gospel arose out of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge ; and after the commencement of the present century, the latter organization continued its missionary proceedings. In 1801 two of the agents went beyond Tanjore on a visit to churches planted by Schwartz, and were happy to see "a new church opened with much solemnity." In a letter from Trichinopoly, 1800, it is reported the catechists often made excursions into the country to preach the gospel to the heathen. "The principles of Christianity many approve of who nevertheless do not enter into the Church being scandalized by the immoral lives of many Europeans." A long account of the illness

and death of the venerable Schwartz is preserved amongst the Society's missionary records.

"During his last illness, the Rev. Mr. Gerické visited him frequently, and spent much of his time with him in conversing on the precious promises of God through Christ, in singing awakening hymns, and in offering his fervent prayers to God to comfort and strengthen his aged servant under his severe sufferings, to continue and increase his Divine blessing upon his labours for the propagation of the gospel, and to bless all the pious endeavours of the Society, and all those institutions established in this country for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ.

"He rehearsed with peculiar emphasis (whilst we were singing) particular parts of the hymns expressing the believer's assurance of faith, and of the great love of God in Christ. His fervour was visible to every one present, whilst Mr. Gerické was praying; and by his loud 'Amen,' showed his ardent desire for the accomplishment of our united petitions.

"A few days before he entered into the joy of his Lord, the Rev. Mr. Gerické asked him whether he had anything to say to the brethren. His answer was, 'Tell them that it is my request that they should make the faithful discharge of their office their chief care and concern.'

"A day or two before his departure, when he was visited by the doctor, he said: 'Doctor, in heaven there will be no pain.' 'Very true,' replied the doctor; 'but we must keep you here as long as we can.' He paused a few moments, and then addressed the doctor with these words: 'Oh, dear doctor! let us take care that we may not be missing there.' These words were delivered with such an affectionate tone of voice, that they made a deep impression on the doctor, and on every one present." [1]

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[1] Abstract of the Annual Reports of the S.P.C.K., p. 483.

In the *Notitia* of 1801, it is stated that in the Malabar congregation of Madras, the previous year there had been one hundred and eight communicants on Easter Day; and besides Malabarians there were, the same day, sixty-three other communicants. It is a significant circumstance that in 1806 we find complaints made, to the effect that "certain missionaries sent out by an Anabaptist Society, and by that called the London Missionary Society, had received a degree of countenance, from the Danish missionaries at least, if not also from some of those more immediately connected with the Society, which tended to produce disorder in the established missions, and could not but be very unsatisfactory to the Church of England Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge."[1] Notice also is taken of an unhappy discord between two missionaries named — which probably arose from the above circumstances. From this, I gather that some of the Lutheran agents were disposed to co-operate with their Dissenting brethren, though others were not; and that the manifestation of friendship towards the new agents was regarded by the Society with decided disapproval.

Complaints are made in 1807 respecting the impracticability for years past of procuring missionaries from ancient sources in Germany; at the same time there is mention made of a new agent, ordained according to rites observed in the Lutheran Communion. It is satisfactory to find in 1808, that "to prevent an accumulation of mere nominal Christians, scrupulous

[1] Abstract, p. 545.

care was taken not to admit any who appeared to have unworthy views;" and the missionaries faithfully told the catechumens that as the benefits received through faith in the gospel of Christ were very great, so would be their condemnation should they prove unfaithful to the solemn engagements they had entered into at baptism.

In connection with these scanty details, it is appropriate to notice a letter written the same year, 1808, by the Bishop of London, Dr. Porteus, calling attention to the spiritual wants of the West Indies. He confessed the difficulty of finding "clergymen of character disposed to undertake foreign missions, and properly qualified for the due discharge of them"—a difficulty which I find noticed at every step in the progress of Church of England missions at that period. In the absence of clerical agency, the metropolitan prelate urges the establishment of parochial schools in every parish of the West India Islands. He alluded to a Society for the conversion of negro slaves, of which he was president, and looked forward to the support of it by the British legislature. He entertained the idea of levying a small parochial rate on the plantations; voluntary contributions, however, were not overlooked, and he offered a £500 donation of his own.

The establishment of a bishopric at Calcutta in 1814 was an important advance towards the propagation of the gospel in India, and it could not but call forth the sympathy and co-operation of the Society. Originally the Diocese comprised all the British territories in the East Indies, to which Ceylon was added

by letters patent in 1817. In 1823 a wider extension followed, reaching to "the utmost limits of the Company's charter"; and in 1824, New South Wales and its dependencies were included within this enormous see.[1]

In the year 1824, bishoprics were founded in Jamaica and Barbadoes. The Bahamas were connected with Jamaica, and Dr. Lipscomb was appointed diocesan. Barbadoes, under Dr. W. H. Coleridge, embraced the islands of Antigua and Trinidad. The same year is a marked era in the Society's history. Up to that time the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had carried on Indian missionary work; but then it was resolved to transfer the management of it to the venerable daughter institute. The resolution was carried into effect in Calcutta and Bombay the following year, 1825; and in Madras in 1826. When the transfer had been accomplished, the Report of the Society for 1826 recorded 6 missionaries, 141 native catechists, 8,352 Christians, and 1,232 children in schools. The missionaries and Christians were fourfold as many in 1880, and the children mounted up to 13,207. A new impulse was given to efforts in Antigua by the appointment of two Bishops for the West Indies.

In 1821 the total receipts of the Propagation Society were only £12,858; in 1831 they reached £17,801.[2]

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[1] Dr. Heber succeeded Dr. Middleton in 1823; Dr. James succeeded Dr. Heber in 1827; and Dr. Turner succeeded Dr. James in 1829.

[2] Annual Reports, *The Mission Field, Bishoprics in Foreign Parts.*

Efforts for the education of poor children were made by that section of the English Church just described. Andrew Bell was a Scotchman, who, on leaving the college of St. Andrew's, visited America, and spent a few years as tutor in one of the Southern States. On his return he entered into holy orders, and became minister of an Episcopal Church at Leith. He then sailed for India, and was appointed chaplain to five or six regiments. He became honorary superintendent of the Military Orphan Asylum, and there tested the operation of his theory on the subject of what is called monitorial instruction. There was nothing novel in this method of teaching, beyond the employment of older boys to teach younger ones, thus abridging the toil of a master. Instead of taking boy by boy, or class by class, he undertook the oversight of a number divided into groups, and placed under monitors, who taught them to read and spell by using lesson boards hung on the walls. His attempt succeeded. Bell returned to England, and here introduced his new scheme. He became rector of Swanage, master of Sherburn Hospital, prebendary of Hereford, and afterwards of Westminster Abbey. He left a large fortune, which he bequeathed principally to the promotion of educational purposes. His monitorial system was adopted by Churchmen, but with it they connected the use of the Church catechism as a primary guide in religious instruction. Thus in 1811 arose "The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church."

CHAPTER IV.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH (continued).

1800–1830.

BY the side of this stream of thought, more or less anti-Calvinistic, there flowed another, with which for a long time it refused to mingle. Nothing could be more distinct, for more than a quarter of our century, than the two currents. The Rhone and the Arve at Geneva offer no bad illustration of the two, in their contiguity and separation. Most of the men described in the last chapter declined intimate fellowship with those about to be described; and, indeed, for the most part, the latter, from want of sympathy, felt no desire to hold intercourse with the former. "The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans."

The defects of early Evangelicals are manifest. They were destitute generally of any great taste for literature and art, and used a somewhat peculiar religious dialect; also they were intolerant of other men's opinions, questioning the religion of those pronounced unevangelical, and they were one-sided in their theological systems.[1] In addition to these defects peculiar

[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 216.

to themselves, they shared in many prevalent elsewhere at the same time. They did not clearly distinguish between scientific theology and spiritual religion. The inferences of eminent divines amongst reformers, amongst Puritans, and even amongst themselves, were too often confounded with the teachings of Scripture. They eschewed the Schoolmen, they glanced suspiciously at some of the Fathers; but they were deferential disciples of Luther and Calvin; and if they did not dip into Herbert Thorndike, they were profoundly acquainted with John Owen. They repudiated all authority but that of the Bible, yet they were powerfully influenced by their own favourite authors. Nor had they, beyond their contemporaries, any conception of Biblical and historical theology, as it is pursued in our day, under an impulse given by scholars such as Reuss and Oosterzee, Hagenbach and Shedd. Perspective was neglected in their theological pictures, the relative proportions of certain doctrines being almost overlooked, and an undue importance attached to minor points in details of belief. Of course, it was not possible for them to anticipate the results of modern criticism. Perhaps they scarcely appreciated the value of what was being accomplished by Herbert Marsh and others. A dislike to the theology of such men interfered with a due estimate of their Biblical researches.

Yet when all this is said—and I have put the matter in strong terms—it remains true, that what they lost in breadth they gained in depth. There was a living power in their convictions, which moved their whole being, and gave incisiveness to words, boldness to

work. They did what no other band of clergymen were doing at that time. Now that some old controversies are gone to sleep; now that the attacks made on them by the orthodox, and their own reflections upon unfair critics, are forgotten; now that prejudices are dissipated, and charity towards departed spirits is cherished; few will deny that Evangelicals were an immense power for good at the commencement of this century, and a long while afterwards; that they were the very salt of the Church of England, during a period when influences existed threatening decay and corruption.

If not for any number of dignitaries within its circle, if not for a multitude of adherents in its ranks, yet for spiritual force, for religious efficiency, the Evangelical movement can scarcely be overestimated. Loose conceptions of it prevail in some quarters; and it is thought to have been born on Clapham Common and to have been cradled in Exeter Hall. Dates drop out of notice, and incidents distant in point of time are inaccurately put in combination. The Evangelical school began before Clapham became a rendezvous for a few of its members, and it had reached the zenith of its power and glory before Exeter Change was turned into Exeter Hall.

The old chiefs were near their end when this century opened. Newton and Cecil, attached friends, united leaders, the Moses and Joshua of the revived Israel, had fallen asleep at the close of the first decade. Newton died in 1807—for some time before unable to hold clerical meetings in his house

at Hoxton,[1] but still continuing to preach. "Mr. Newton is very feeble," writes Mr. Bull,—"had great difficulty to get out of the coach. I was obliged to lift him with all my strength." The good man was strong in his opinion, that he was as capable as ever, and defended his position with some warmth. Cecil ventured to say, "Might it not be best to consider your work as done, and to stop before you evidently discover you can speak no longer?" "I cannot stop," said the veteran, raising his voice. "What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?" His last sermon was for the sufferers at the battle of Trafalgar, when he wandered from his subject, and had to be reminded of what it was. A prisoner at home, he told a friend, "I am like a person going a journey in a stage-coach, who expects its arrival every hour, and is frequently looking out at the window for it." "My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things—that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour."[2] He died in

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[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 211.

[2] *Memoir of the Rev. John Newton*, Cecil's Works, by Pratt, vol. i. pp. 342 *et seq.* *John Newton*, by Josiah Bull, pp. 356–8. *Autobiography of the Rev. W. Jay*, p. 272.

It is curious to find the following passage in the diary of Dr. Bunting, December 1st, 1803. Mr. Cecil preached an excellent sermon on temptation. "On the whole, I was very much delighted, though I acknowledge the justice of a critique on Mr. Cecil as a preacher made in my hearing by Mr. Symons, a pious clergyman. He said, 'Mr. Cecil is a very wise preacher. He is a second Book of Ecclesiastes. Yet I should like him better, and he would do more good, if he were rather a second Epistle to the Romans.'"—*The Life of Dr. Bunting*, vol. i. p. 217.

1807. These are not merely interesting anecdotes of an old man, they are illustrations of character belonging to Evangelicals ingeneral. Preaching Christ was their chief joy, and they "lived on the sides of eternity."

Cecil followed Newton in 1810. After much persuasion, he accepted the living of Chobham, while he still held the incumbency of St. John's, Bedford Row. A horror of pluralism was common to the class. In this instance the addition to his income was, however, very small. Cecil had previously written memoirs of the Hon. and Rev. W. B. Cadogan, an eminent Evangelical minister at Reading in the 18th century, and of John Bacon, the celebrated sculptor, one of Cecil's hearers, and an intimate friend; and now he added memoirs of John Newton. These works are worthy of notice as illustrating the biographical literature of the Evangelicals. Dates were overlooked, and artistic arrangement neglected; but there was sure to be a full delineation of religious character, secrets of the heart were fully opened, oscillations of experience were distinctly traced, and death-bed sayings were carefully treasured up. The last days and the last utterances of Cecil himself are minutely recorded. "Throughout his illness, his whole mind, instead of being fixed on some mean and insignificant concern, was riveted on spiritual objects. Every other topic was so uninteresting to him, and even burdensome, that he could with reluctance allow it to be introduced. The value of his soul, the emptiness of the world, the nearness and solemnity of death, were ever on his lips. He spent his whole time in

reading the Scripture, and one or two old divines, particularly Archbishop Leighton. All he said and did was as a man on the brink of the eternal state."[1] Forgetfulness of earthly, absorption in heavenly things, was his constant habit, in contrast with that of many clerical contemporaries, in resemblance to the most illustrious saints of the Middle Ages, though they were not the models that the rector of Chobham was wont to study. In a rush of pious Protestant fervour he exclaimed, "'None but Christ! none but Christ!' said Lambert, dying at the stake: the same, in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, saith Richard Cecil." Gurnal's *Christian Armour* was a Puritan book in his hand when seized with apoplexy.[2]

Thomas Scott lived on till 1821, being all that while a pillar in the Evangelical aisle of the English Church. His answer to Tomline belongs to this period, being published in 1811; so does his famous Commentary, which continued to bear the title of a "Family Bible" until 1815. The popularity of the work was wonderful, and it was one main instrument in keeping alive evangelical sentiments and methods of interpretation. A clergyman, who afterwards attained to great eminence,[3] was loud in its praise, and in a funeral sermon for his friend he said, "The capital excellency of this valuable and immense undertaking, perhaps, consists in following more closely than any other the fair and adequate meaning

[1] *Life of Cecil*, prefixed to his works, vol. i. pp. 40, 41.

[2] I have in my possession the copy, lent to him by a relative of mine.

[3] Daniel Wilson.

of every part of Scripture, without regard to the niceties of human systems."

Here is touched a point which marks a difference between Evangelicals and the Puritans of the 17th century. Goodwin, Owen, and others were determined systematizers; Newton, Cecil, and Scott were not so, and this was no small excellency. It is well appreciated by Sir James Stephen. Referring to Scott, he says: "He would have seen the labours of his life perish, and would have perished with them, rather than distort the sense of revelation by a hair's-breadth from what he believed to be its genuine meaning. He rendered to his party (if with such a man party can be fitly associated) the inestimable service of showing how their distinguishing tenets may be deduced from the sacred canon, or reconciled with it, and of placing their feet on that which Chillingworth had proclaimed as the Rock of the Reformation."[1]

But between the opening of the century and the death of Scott there appeared other teachers of the same faith. Thomas Robinson was half a century old in the year 1800, and had already written on Scripture characters; but in 1805 he came forward as doctrinal theologian in a book unfolding the Christian system. Of the welcome it received, evidence exists in the *Eclectic Review*, where it is thus described: "The language is plain, the argument perspicuous, and the arrangement clear and comprehensive. Here are no learned references, or displays of extensive reading,

[1] Stephen's *Essays*.

so that the humble Christian will feel quite at home while enjoying this substantial repast."[1]

Robinson says in his preface: "The author comes not forward as a disputant or a controversialist, but as a plain, practical writer desirous to promote the purposes of Christian faith and holiness." In truth the work is rather religious than theological, properly speaking, and cannot be placed in the same rank with Scott's productions. Scott was a valiant man of war: Robinson a peaceful shepherd feeding his flock. Robert Hall, then at Leicester, described his friend's character and influence:—

"Endowed with a capacity for high attainments in science, and distinguished at the University by the honours assigned to superior merit, he generously declined the pursuit of literary eminence for the sole purpose of doing good. His residence in Leicester forms an epoch in the religious history of this county. From that time must be dated, and to his agency under Providence must be ascribed, a decided improvement in the moral and religious state of this town and its vicinity. . . . It is only once in an age that an individual is permitted to confer such benefits on the place of his residence as this ancient and respectable borough derived from the labours of Mr. Robinson; and the change which Baxter effected at Kidderminster, he effected at Leicester. To the veneration in which he was so generally held, may be ascribed the principal part of that freedom from party animosities which has for a long period so happily distinguished this town."[2]

Thomas Gisborne, in his earlier days, invoked the

[1] *Eclectic Review* for 1805, part ii. p. 925.

[2] Robinson and Hall resided in Leicester at the same time. Hall's *Works*, vol. iv. pp. 286, 289, 291.

muse, and in later ones entered upon geological subjects. He also attempted devout speculations concerning Love as one of the Divine attributes; but the main theme of his published works is Christian morality. He acknowledged a defect in the teaching of *some* of his brethren; they were, he thought, more earnest on doctrinal points than on others. Some preachers, he said, shocked at substituting mere morality for the bread of life, and fearful lest their hearers should suspect them of legality, did not give to morals the place properly belonging to them as fruits of faith. Anxious not to mistake the branch for the root, in digging down to the root they neglected the branch. It is only an instance out of hundreds illustrating the one-sidedness of the human mind, and its tendency to rush from one extreme to another. Gisborne set himself to correct this mistake, and issued several books on specific Christian duties. They served to redeem Evangelical religion from a common reproach on the ground of the absorbing attention it paid to doctrines. Gisborne seems to have been still more remarkable as a man than as an author. He was a gentleman of fortune, inheriting a large estate in the counties of Derby and Stafford, bordering on Needwood Forest—a charming retreat, celebrated in the letters of Wilberforce, who was delighted when he "saw the first foliage of the magnificent oak contrast with the dark holly, the flowering gorse, and the horse chestnut."[1] Yoxall Lodge,

[1] *The Life of W. Wilberforce*, abridged, p. 527. The letter referred to was written in 1827.

standing in the thickest part, was Gisborne's ancestral home. He was solicited to stand for the representation of Derbyshire, but he preferred the ministry of the Church to a political career. His books are described as "only the recreations of his leisure; the business of his life was different." "There was not a cottage in the neighbouring hamlet, nor a hut within the glades, or on the edge of the forest, where he and his wife were not known. They were the advisers of the whole neighbourhood, and the parishioners appealed to the parson to settle their quarrels. Stories told him were opportunities for lessons; little incidents were pegs on which he hung suitable morals. He was a man of reading, a man of taste beyond many, handling his pencil with skill and power, and colouring landscapes so as to suggest hints to one of the chief painters of the day."

Two other names belonging to that period are conspicuous.

Legh Richmond and Charles Simeon started in clerical life in the last century, and did not pass away until after the first quarter of the present one had closed. The former, converted by reading Wilberforce's *Practical View*, pursued his sacred calling in the Isle of Wight, at the Lock Hospital, and in the village of Turvey, Bedfordshire, where he died in 1827. His tracts made a wonderful impression. *The Dairyman's Daughter* and *The Young Cottager* are British Christian classics; and *The Negro Servant* and *The African Widow*, though less known, are not unworthy of the author. His *Domestic Portraiture*, also, is a charming work, in which, with

tender parental love, he embalms the memory of three of his children.

Charles Simeon survived till 1836, a distance of fifty years since he commenced his Cambridge career. He did much spiritual work, stimulating the gownsmen, and preaching the gospel with much acceptance. Paying attention to the composition of sermons, he republished Claude's *Essay* on the subject, with a hundred skeletons of his own; and at length accumulated a mass of homiletic matter which he arranged in the eleven volumes of his *Horæ Homileticæ*. Six more were added, and the whole, re-edited after his death, made a goodly show in many a clerical library. They are said to contain 2,536 discourses, serving for a Biblical exposition and a body of divinity. Old fashioned now—not meeting the thoughts and habits of modern times—they nevertheless must have had a powerful effect on the Evangelical clergy. There was little in what Simeon did to satisfy cravings after literary fame—a thing the good man never thought of.

Amongst Cambridge gownsmen of the Evangelical class to whom he extended his substantial assistance was Henry Kirke White, who, with additional help, was enabled to pursue a career in the University which promised literary fame and ministerial success. Southey, who, though not a clergyman, may be reckoned among the churchly authors of his age, and who generously edited the remains of the Nottingham bard, wrote the following sentence, which is well worth quotation :—"I must be permitted to say, that my own views of the religion of Jesus Christ differ

essentially from the system of belief which he had adopted ; but having said this, it is indeed my anxious wish to do full justice to piety so fervent. It was in him a loving and quickening principle of goodness which sanctified all his hopes, and all his affections, which made him keep watch over his own heart, and enabled him to correct the few symptoms which it ever displayed of human imperfection."[1] What the critic said of the student, is equally true of the patron.

Of both Legh Richmond and Charles Simeon I have a vivid recollection. I heard them in Norwich plead on behalf of societies with which they thoroughly identified themselves, and which, according to a custom I believe elsewhere observed, held their annual auxiliary meeting in the city at the same season. There were very few Evangelical clergymen in the neighbourhood then ; but the churches where they preached were crowded with hearers, and the life diffused stood out in contrast with surrounding apathy. The week of these church anniversaries was a gala time for the Evangelical laity, increased by visitors from Nonconformist congregations. Saint Lawrence's Church, in the lower part of the East Anglian capital, was filled on such occasions ; and I can now see Legh Richmond, with his pleasant, smiling face, and his large spectacles, mounting the pulpit stairs with his lame foot—the preacher attired, not in white surplice, but in black gown, without anything of a priest in his appearance and manner. He took for his text—his sermon was

[1] *Remains of Kirke White*, vol. i. p. 58.

on behalf of the Jews—"For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof;" and with a soft, winning voice, and with "sweet reasonableness," he discoursed on the interest which all Christians should take in the Church of God, and especially in building into it the ancient people of Israel. In St. Andrew's Hall, where religious meetings were wont to be held, he made a speech on behalf of the Bible Society, full of anecdotes told in his own characteristic style, relating, I remember, a conversation he had with the Emperor Alexander of Russia, when he visited England. Charles Simeon was a different man, not penetrating like dew, but coming down like "hailstones and coals of fire." I was struck with the preacher's force, even vehemence. He spoke as one who had a burden from the Lord to deliver—as one who, like Paul, felt, "Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel!"

Samuel Chase is less known than either Richmond or Simeon; but, if we may judge of him by his writings, he must have been a man of power superior to theirs. He published two works, probably overlooked by many, entitled *Messiah's Advent* and *Antinomianism Unmasked.* The titles give little idea of the contents, as they are too vague; the latter of them might indicate an angry controversial work; but the author, who thought deeply, had at command an even-flowing, sonorous style, not such as is common now, but was eminently characteristic of superior writers at that time. The moral force of the gospel, and the peculiarity of it, not consisting so much in laying down precepts as in affording spiritual inspirations, is admirably

illustrated in the first-named book, and some singularly original remarks on law and grace successively displayed in the ministrations of Moses, recur in the *Antinomianism Unmasked.* Robert Hall wrote a preface to this latter production, of a highly commendatory character.

After the death of Newton and Cecil, when Scott was above sixty, and Richmond and Simeon were in the midst of their work, and in the zenith of their fame, Daniel Wilson, who had distinguished himself at Oxford, became curate at St. John's, Bedford Row, once Cecil's chapel. The assistant began in 1809, and in 1812 became sole curate, remaining so until he became vicar of Islington in 1824. The great extent and growing population of that suburban village rendered it even then a diocese rather than a parish, and several district churches had arisen in the neighbourhood. His ability and eloquence, combined with great fervour and activity, while at St. John's, soon raised Mr. Wilson to a commanding position amongst the London Evangelicals, and after he removed to Islington, his administrative power gave him increased influence. He was, in fact, bishop in the north of London; and the large church of St. Mary's was crowded to the doors, when he ascended the pulpit, and discoursed in tones of impassioned oratory. His style of preaching when extemporaneous was free and easy, with no depth of thoughtfulness, but generally inspired with Evangelical fervour; and it greatly moved the good people of Islington, where his sentiments leavened large numbers. He had a following amongst Dissenters as well as Church people.

So long as he remained, he carried everything before him, and Islington might be called the Goshen of Evangelicalism. The metropolitan see of Calcutta was offered him in 1832—a mark of respect for a section of the Established Church which had hitherto shared little of the patronage of Government. Though unwilling to leave his old friends, he accepted the Oriental appointment, and on his way to India expressed his continued attachment to the sentiments of his youth. "Father Scott's comment is my companion." His position at Oxford had indicated his advanced classical culture; and to this he added a taste for the study of Butler, not common with men of his order. An essay he wrote to be prefixed to the *Analogy*, proves what an admiration he had for the author; at the same time, he points out what he considered defects in the treatise, and these he endeavoured to supply.

Some years after Daniel Wilson had begun to be a leading spirit in the Evangelical section of the Establishment, Edward Bickersteth, destined to occupy a front place in the Division, entered the Church, but under different circumstances from those of his predecessor and friend. Bickersteth studied neither at Oxford nor Cambridge, but was entirely what is called a self-made man. Until he was nearly thirty, he remained a solicitor in the city of Norwich; and then, in 1815, entered into holy orders. Religious convictions of the strongest kind induced him to take this step, and immediately he threw himself with the whole force of his character into the fulfilment of his new vocation. Until 1830 he resided in

London, filling the office of secretary to the Church Missionary Society; and for the latter part of that time he was closely connected with the Missionary College at Islington. Whilst this was the centre of his operations, the circumference swept all England over; everywhere almost he was known as the strenuous advocate of his cherished institutions. Though, for want of early education, he never became a scholar, yet, by dint of hard reading, he acquired stores of knowledge which made him a respectable instructor. He published a number of practical and experimental works, and is best known by his *Scripture Help*, which soon commanded the enormous sale of thirty thousand copies of a larger size, and more than a hundred and thirty thousand of a smaller one. By this and other popular works, he largely assisted in propagating Evangelical principles. He turned his attention to the study of prophecy, and, after changing his views, adopted those denominated premillenarian. The personal reign of Christ on the earth, before the thousand years of blessedness predicted in Scripture, he quaintly designated a *generation truth*, from the persuasion he had of its being pre-eminently suited to passing times. He expected that a visible anti-Christ would lead the last apostasy; that the first resurrection is to be literally interpreted; and that the Jews, converted and restored, are to be successful missionaries to heathen Gentiles.[1]

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[1] There were other Evangelical clergymen, now nearly forgotten, who in their own day were very highly esteemed. For example,

It may be remarked in connection with what I have said of Bickersteth, that the second coming of Christ was a favourite subject with the Evangelical clergy. The study of prophecy has from time to time laid hold of the Christian Church with a determined grasp, and much of the interest it awakened turns on the interpretation of the Apocalypse. Three systems, it may be observed in passing, have appeared in the study of this book. The *preterist*, according to which the predictions of St. John are applied to the history of Jerusalem, and of pagan Rome, down to the fall of each; the events comprised within those periods being represented as exhaustive of the meaning of the successive visions. This view has not found much favour with any English theologians. The *spiritual*, or moral, pertaining to the philosophy of history, and treating the book, as filled, not so much with presages of particular events, as with indications of forces helpful and inimical, in the moral conflict waged on the battlefield of this world. Thus the religious history of the kingdom of God, in past, present, and future days, is presented in the breaking of the seals, the sounding of the trumpets, and the

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"the Rev. H. Foster was a plain and deeply pious man, without any particular decoration of taste, style, or eloquence in his general preaching. His ministrations were much valued on account of their heart-searching and experimental character. On certain subjects so great was his solemnity of manner, especially when discoursing upon death and eternity, that the late Mr. Wilberforce used to say, that he was on those occasions the most eloquent man he knew." *Eclectic Notes during the years* 1798–1814. Edited by J. H. Pratt.

pouring out of the vials. Lastly, the historical and *futurist*, beginning with the application of prophecies to the early ages of Christianity, and then proceeding to their application to modern times, and also to the future. It is the third of these methods that Evangelicals generally adopted. Some neglected prophetical expositions, some leaned to other methods of exposition; but a large number pursued the historical and futurist scheme. Bickersteth affords an example; others are found in the writings of Faber and Elliot. Faber I have mentioned as a Bampton lecturer; and though he belonged more to the orthodox than the Evangelical party, it may be noticed here that he takes a conspicuous place as an expositor of prophecy. In 1806 he wrote on what had been fulfilled, and was then fulfilling, or was thereafter to be fulfilled, relative to the period of twelve hundred years, the Papal and Muhammadan apostasies, the reign of Antichrist, and the restoration of the Jews. His earlier speculations were superseded by his *Sacred Calendar of Prophecy* in 1828. In this work he combined the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, especially those by Daniel and St. John, endeavouring to work out harmonious views in reference to their chronological aspects. The notions of this author at the end of thirty years differed from those he entertained at the beginning, for changefulness is common with writers on prophecy. If I may anticipate, I would mention the *Horæ Apocalypticæ* of Mr. Elliot of Brighton, which reached a fourth edition in 1841. It marks a later stage of prophetical interpretation. He was more

intent on the past than the future, and differed greatly from his predecessors in certain historical illustrations; still he referred the opening of the sixth seal to the reign of the Emperor Constantine, which Cunningham applied to the French Revolution. Elliot's historical interpretation closed with the pouring out of the sixth vial, a symbol which he regarded as importing the exhaustion of the Turkish power—a process represented by him as having commenced in 1820. He was cautious in his anticipations of the future; but the Pope's struggle to regain ascendency after his humiliation under Napoleon I., Elliot believed would issue in some important event about the year 1866, when a death-blow would be given to papal usurpation.

The study of prophecy was much encouraged in Evangelical circles, not only by books and pamphlets, but by clerical conferences, and by meetings for discussing the subjects. Laymen and Nonconformist ministers also took part on these occasions; and Edward Irving, with Henry Drummond, then rising to popular notice in the religious world, occupied a leading place amongst prophetical students. At Albury Park, in Surrey, the home of Mr. Drummond, a party met from time to time to spend days together in the study of Scripture—the great orator of Hatton Garden, who mixed with the London Evangelicals, often wearying his companions by the inordinate length of his eloquent expositions and his fervent prayers. Amusing anecdotes of this were related at the time. Mr. Drummond, whose racy parliamentary speeches full of destructive criticism

are now almost forgotten, joined the Catholic Apostolic Church, of which his friend Irving may be called the founder, and to him the new sect was mainly indebted for the magnificent edifice in Torrington Square, where an elaborate ceremonial could be carried out with effect.

But Albury Park, at the time I mention, is thrown into the shade by what occurred on Clapham Common from the year 1800 to the year 1815. Henry Thornton—the member who helped Wilberforce in the Indian debates, and in various philanthropic schemes—lived in a nook at the top of Battersea Rise. The house still remains, not much altered; there Mr. Pitt used to spend brief holidays; and the Thornton Library, a room in which the host received large companies of friends, was arranged according to a plan suggested by the illustrious statesman. Thornton was a humble-minded Christian, loving the gospel intensely, and striving to bring his neighbours and friends to the "knowledge of the truth." A near house to his was occupied by the Grant family, in which he took the most affectionate interest; George Grant, who had been to India, and was one of the directors of the East India Company, being an intimate associate and trusty counsellor. Across the Common, at no great distance, Lord Teignmouth resided. He had been Governor-General of India, and returned to his native country with a heart warmed by Evangelical sympathies and affections, to enter upon the business of the Bible Society, "as full of zest when he seated himself in the Clapham coach with his umbrella by his side, as when he rolled

in the pomp of sovereignty through the streets of Calcutta." James Stephen, father of Sir James, the well-known essayist, lived hard by, an intimate friend of all three. Wilberforce took a house on the Common, and the garden at Broomfield, as the place was called, stretched along Henry Thornton's domain, "and melted into one of their united shrubberies." But Wilberforce, who was ever moving his tent, like an Arab of the desert, dashing from the country into town, and from town into the country, now at one end of England, then at another, did not retain Broomfield nominally for more than ten years. We find him "establishing" himself there in June, 1798, and spending his Sundays in the same spot quietly in 1804; but in the September of that year, he moved with his family to Lyme, in Dorsetshire, after living the earlier months in Palace Yard. He had also from time to time lodgings in the Terrace, for he said he must have a nest close to the House of Commons. Clapham Common was far from being a constant abode whilst he held the property, and in 1808 he removed altogether, and "settled within a mile of Hyde Park Corner," at Kensington Gore.

Wilberforce was the main pillar of that little party which immortalized the name of the suburban retreat, and he contributed to the strength and stability of the Evangelical Church section throughout the country. His social position, his early friendship with Pitt and other great statesmen, his fame as a philanthropist, especially as the negroes' friend, his popularity as an author, and his eloquence on the Parliament floor and the religious platform, were circumstances which

secured for him an unparalleled personal influence. At the same time, his freedom as a politican from party ties, his moderation and habit of mediatorship between Whigs and Tories, preserved him from antipathies which one-sided opinions on State affairs are sure to engender. Pious men and women, whether supporters or opponents of the Government, could without difficulty rally round such a man, and follow him as leader in Christian movements. Evangelicals in all denominations owed him much more than has ever been acknowledged.

Besides the Clapham residents already noticed were two Evangelical clergymen, incumbents of the parish, who came in succession—Dr. Dealtry following John Venn—both memorable preachers of "the simple gospel." The leading people of the place, with the exception of William Smith, a Unitarian, were one and all staunch Churchmen. Clapham Common had plenty of visitors. Grant brought Henry Martyn to Broomfield on a visit to Wilberforce, "and their conversation," says the missionary in his journal, "during the whole day was edifying, agreeable to what I should think right for two godly senators: planning some means of bringing before Parliament propositions for bettering the moral state of the colony of Botany Bay. At evening worship, Mr. Wilberforce expounded sacred Scripture with serious plainness, and prayed in the midst of his large household."[1] Isaac Milner, Master of Queen's and Dean of Carlisle, was another visitor,

[1] Abridged *Life of Wilberforce*, p. 313.

"under the shelter of whose name his College flourished as the best cultured and most fruitful nursery of the Evangelical neophytes of Cambridge."[1] Simeon, too, whose "adventurous attitudes, and ceaseless play of the facial muscles," amused those who knew him, was also a cherished friend at Clapham. So was Thomas Gisborne from Yoxall Lodge, who, whenever he "appeared, was cordially welcomed, and became for a time a partner in the councils of the cabinet" on the Common, touching anti-slavery and other matters, but was "a silent and somewhat embarrassed spectator of modes of life from which he shrank with alarm." Babington, member for Leicester, was an Evangelical friend of Wilberforce's, and joined in the Clapham conferences. Hannah More, too, was an occasional visitor.[2]

The name of "the Clapham sect" is open to criticism, as only very few of those identified with it were residents.[3] Zachary Macaulay resided in London; Babington in Leicestershire; Gisborne in Staffordshire; Milner and Simeon at Cambridge. These worthies only paid flying visits. And there is exaggeration in the statement as to what is called "the Clapham sect," that the whole organization of the Evangelical party was their work.[4] The Bible Society originated in the Tract Society, and the birth-

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[1] Stephen's *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. ii. p. 367.

[2] Much of this account is gleaned from Colquhoun's *William Wilberforce and his Friends.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 455. I had come to a conclusion like Mr. Colquhoun's before noticing his remarks.

[4] Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, vol. i. p. 62.

place of the Tract Society was not Clapham, but Swan Stairs, London Bridge. The Church Missionary Society arose from discussions in the Eclectic meetings held in London, and the first meeting for organizing the Institution was held in Aldersgate Street.[1] Though not so distinguished by originating power as some have supposed, there can be no doubt that the Clapham group exerted a considerable influence over Evangelical movements in the first decade of the century, especially so long as Wilberforce at intervals made Broomfield his country house. One scheme did originate there, the publication of the *Christian Observer*, a known organ of the Evangelical party. It commenced in the year 1801. The person who suggested it was Mr. Hey, who did not live at Clapham, but in Yorkshire; and, though continuing a professed member of the Church of England, connected himself, at least for a time, with the Wesleyan Methodists, "from whose preaching he derived good."[2] Babington, whose home was in Leicestershire, became editor. "He managed it with singular tact. He prevailed on persons to write in it whom none but he could persuade. He induced Henry Thornton to write, and Robert Grant, and Wilberforce and Bowdler. Their writings were noticed—his part was in the shade."[3] Babing-

[1] *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 423.

[2] *Colquhoun*, p. 369.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 250. On another page (181) Mr. Colquhoun says Zachary Macaulay was for many years the editor, and he reckons Hannah More, Stephen, and Gisborne amongst the contributors.

ton supplied the periodical with a monthly review of politics, "singularly terse and clear."[1] He was also author of a work on *Christian Education*, and in advance of some who belonged to his school of theology, he remarked, "how little there is in Scripture to justify that austere formalism which presents to the young mind a forbidding uniformity; how little there is in Christianity of stern dogma, rising up like a wall to heaven, to shut out the gentle presence of a loving Friend."[2]

If the influence of "the Clapham sect" in the establishment of societies has been exaggerated,—if what may be called "organic action" be attributed to it beyond what ascertained facts would warrant, there can be no doubt that the personal influence of those who occasionally met there was exceedingly powerful, and that it tended to give Evangelicalism a social status which lifted it above the contempt in which it was held at an earlier age. Perhaps the zenith of prosperity in the Evangelical section of the English Church may be dated from 1810 to 1830; and in the promotion of it Wilberforce and his friends had an important share. I am speaking of that section as "a party," as a confederation, distinct and compact, arising out of opposing circumstances. Its sentiments, beyond all question, became afterwards much more widely diffused. Evangelical truth prevailed to a greater degree than ever when it ceased to be identified with a particular school.

Prejudice has painted sombre pictures of "the

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[1] *Colquhoun*, p. 250. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

Methodists" in the Church of England at that day; but the life at Clapham seems to have been pleasant and cheerful. There, on a May afternoon, under Scotch firs, elms, and arbeil trees, young and old would gather on the fresh grass, the children not checked but encouraged in their frolics by the kind-hearted elders.[1] Hannah More with sparkling talk, Lord Teignmouth in rather drowsy tones, Macaulay listening and silent, Babington "dropping weighty words with husky voice," the member for Yorkshire dashing in amongst them all with his indescribable gait, and winning smiles, and joyous humour—these were anything but melancholy figures on the Common.[1] At the same time, it is a mistake to suppose that they blended, as some suppose, what may be called a worldly spirit with religious pretensions. They were far from being avaricious, and had no fondness for fashionable display. John Thornton was a successful merchant, but no one could be more open-handed, or more simple in his personal habits, Any one who reads the life of his intimate friend, William Bull, of Newport Pagnell, must see this; and Thornton's son, Henry, walked in his father's steps. The house where he lived was no lordly mansion, but a modest residence combining elegance with simplicity. As to Wilberforce, the inheritor of a large fortune, he was profuse in his charity; but, as I have understood, was by no means lavish in expenditure upon indulgences, and in the exhibition of domestic grandeur. "The Clapham sect" has been charged

[1] Colquhoun, p. 305.

with maintaining a theoretical asceticism, and as practically addicted to the pride of life. Facts contradict such gratuitous representations. "His house seemed to me," says the distinguished George Ticknor, a man familiar with fashionable and courtly society in England and on the Continent, "a kind of refuge from the wearisome gaiety of the town. . . . I always came away with regret, because I felt that I had been in the midst of influences which ought to have made me better."[1]

The Clapham Evangelicals, however, appear under aristocratic aspects. Nowhere else, probably, did so many of the upper ten thousand gather round the standard uplifted by Newton and Cecil. Yet it is remarkable how comparatively few of the noble families of England were represented in this religious movement. The Grosvenors, the Pelhams, the Ashleys, not to mention others who have since rendered very great services to the cause, had not then taken their places in the ranks; though many of the English gentry, and especially of the wealthier merchants, identified themselves with the party from its beginning. The Shirleys, the Vansittarts, and the houses of Roden and Ducie, contributed to its strength and influence at an early part of this century.

One of Henry Thornton's proteges was Claudius Buchanan, a Scotch lad, whom John Newton introduced to his friend at Clapham, and who, by the assistance of that friend, went to Cambridge to study

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[1] *Life of George Ticknor*, vol. i. p. 297.

for the ministry. Afterwards, through the influence of Thornton and Grant, he obtained a chaplainship to the East India Company, and, three years after his arrival at Calcutta in 1797, he received an appointment as Vice-Provost and Classical Professor of the College at Fort William, an institution which was founded by the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General. Buchanan was not a man to be satisfied with routine duties; but, fired with Evangelical zeal, he contemplated the propagation of Christianity amongst heathens and Muhammadans. With this view, he started on a long and laborious missionary tour, the result of which he published in his *Christian Researches*. Possessed of a methodical and comprehensive mind, he formed an elaborate plan for the work of Biblical translation, based on Catholic principles. Perhaps he was too sanguine and premature in his proceedings; certainly he did not meet with the encouragement he sought, but raised objections to his scheme in the minds of men zealous like himself for the conversion of India. Those who had no sympathy with him in his missionary spirit opposed him on the ground that Hindus did not need conversion, that their religion was good enough, and needed little improvement; moreover, that faith must be kept with Muhammadans, who could not endure to have the claims of their prophet called in question. Indian merchants connected with the Company abroad and at home were up in arms against the proposals of their chaplain and vice-provost. The College was discouraged, its very existence was threatened; and when, after Buchanan's

return to Calcutta, he drew up a paper relating what he had seen and done, its publication in the Government *Gazette* was forbidden; upon which he printed and circulated it in a different form. But though his designs were in a measure frustrated, it is clear that he accomplished a great work, and gave an impetus to missions appreciated long afterwards. Soon after his missionary tour was completed, he preached sermons on prophecy which did not please the authorities; and upon their being advertised for publication, he received a letter from the chief secretary, desiring that he would transmit the manuscript for the inspection of Government. He withdrew the publication, and in 1808 returned to England. After his arrival he issued a memoir respecting an ecclesiastical establishment in India; the memoir produced a great sensation. It was attacked by a senior merchant of the Bengal province, and by an officer of the Bengal army. The latter boldly defended the character of the Hindus, and treated missions as useless and impertinent. Bishop Porteus, in an anonymous pamphlet, answered the officer.[1] Buchanan died in 1815, just after attending the funeral of Henry Thornton.

Though an East Indian chaplain, Buchanan's spirit and temper presented an example of the kind of enterprise carried on by the Society for missions to Africa and the East, instituted in the year 1799.

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[1] See *A Memoir of Rev. Claudius Buchanan*, by Pearson, abridged in some parts and enlarged in others, published by the American Tract Society, New York.

The chairman of the first meeting of this Society was John Venn, incumbent of Clapham, "a man of such wisdom and comprehension of mind, that on that memorable occasion he laid down before a small company of fellow-helpers, those principles and regulations which have formed the basis of the Society."[1] Though Episcopalian in principle, its early supporters found great difficulty in securing Episcopal patronage. Their plan was submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of London and Durham, the last being chairman of the East Indian committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Wilberforce reported in 1800 that he had seen these prelates, and that his grace "had expressed himself in as favourable a way as could be expected," upon which it was resolved that the committee "should proceed to their great design with all the activity possible." Thomas Scott, who acted as the first secretary, playfully made use of a nautical allusion, remarking, "The Missionary Society lies off 'the Bishop and his Clerks,' where, if not wrecked, it may rot, for what I can see."[2] Josiah

[1] *Jubilee Volume of the Church Missionary Society*, p. 180.

[2] *Memoir of the Rev. H. Venn*, p. 156. Mr. Venn observes: "The difficulty which suspended and seemed to threaten the failure of the undertaking, arose from their determination to be true both to their ecclesiastical and spiritual principles. Had they been willing to make some sacrifice of the spiritual character of their design, it would have been easy to have secured the direct patronage of the heads of the Church, and a large accession of the clergy. Had they been less true to their Church principles, they might have gone forward without waiting for an answer from the Bishops" (p. 158).

Pratt, as practical as he was thoughtful, as careful in details as he was comprehensive in principles, became secretary in 1802, and resigned in 1824. Edward Bickersteth undertook the office in 1815, and resigned in 1831.

It appears that at an early period the Bishop of Durham was jealous of an invasion on the clerical order, from the sanction given to baptisms by lay catechists, which the committee, in cases of necessity, had proposed to allow.[1] The great difficulty for many years was to get missionaries in Episcopalian orders. Like the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, they were obliged to employ Lutheran clergymen, and twenty out of the twenty-seven first sent out were Germans. Strange to say, not until 1815 do any men in English orders appear on the list of the missionaries. Down to 1825, ninety-six agents were employed in foreign fields, and only four of these were University men. This dearth of educated English labourers led to the establishment of a missionary college at Islington in 1825. A steady advance in funds and in achievement, appears from the early reports of the Society. Local associations were formed in 1814; and the income, which began with the low figure of £911, rose that year to above £10,000. West Africa is the field which the Fathers and the founders selected; and as John Newton was one of them, it is interesting to remember, that in the Banana Isles, lying off the south promontory

[1] See letter in December, 1799, to Gisborne, in *Wilberforce's Life.*

of the peninsula where the Society planted their earliest station, that good man had, more than half a century before, been a trader in negroes. Granville Sharp in 1787 had sent to Sierra Leone a number of runaway slaves, who infested the London streets; and it was because this settlement afforded a convenient base of operations, that the Society began its labours in that vicinity. Not until 1813 did they extend to any further distance, when India began to appear on the Society's map. Though "for Africa and the East" was the original designation of the enterprise, yet it took thirteen years to occupy ground in our Oriental empire, owing, in a large measure, to difficulties thrown in the way by the East India Company. But the revision of the charter in 1813 opened a door for English missionaries. Next year appeared the formation of an Indian diocese, and to this sphere of service, as we have seen, Middleton was sent as Bishop. In Calcutta, on Christmas Day, 1814, he preached his first sermon in that city. North India came under cultivation in 1813. South India and Ceylon followed not long afterwards. The last had been marked out as early as 1801. It was not occupied before 1817. Western India was taken up in 1820. The earliest English clergyman sent was the Rev. W. Jowett, in the year 1813; and the Rev. W. Greenwood and the Rev. J. Norton were appointed in the year 1815.[1] Con-

[1] *Church Missionary Atlas*, p. 4; *Jubilee Volume*, p. 194. "Our supply," it is said in this volume, "was scanty and uncertain until the establishment of a seminary at Islington, under the able superintendence of the Rev. John Norman Pearson,

temporaneously with these incidents, the committee despatched agents to New Zealand. The Rev. Mr. Marsden, colonial chaplain at Port Jackson, had prepared for their reception by the Maoris, and, by a remarkable coincidence, preached at Rangihua, in the Bay of Islands, from the words, "I bring you glad tidings of great joy," on the self-same Christmas Day that Middleton opened his commission in India. When the Society had lengthened its cords, as well as strengthened its stakes, it carried those cords in 1822 as far as to the Red Indians in North-Western America. Clustering round Red River, a chain of stations and out-stations began to mark a grand missionary division, extending from the Touchwood Hills to Fort Francis; well-cultivated farms and smiling homesteads dotting what had been a wide wilderness. The West Indies were inscribed on the Society's chronological chart in the year 1826.[1]

M.A., from whence, through the goodness of God, we have always been able to replenish our missions with well-trained recruits.

"In the year 1816 a Missionary Society was established upon Evangelical principles at Basle, in Switzerland, from whence more than eighty students have joined our missions.

"From all these sources the Lord hath supplied our Society with men, animated by the same principles and ready to co-operate in the same work, bringing the various gifts which national peculiarities and various education supply to the furtherance of the gospel among the heathen."

[1] To that chart, and to the beautiful *Church Missionary Atlas* which contains it, I am indebted for much of the information just given. There is an account of the Church Missionary Society in Aikman's *Cyclopædia of Christian Missions*, and much interesting information on the subject in the Memoir of its secretary, Henry Venn.

The difficulty in obtaining Episcopal support and patronage was gradually overcome; and the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Barrington, who lived till 1827, and had opportunities of watching the Society's progress, bequeathed to it the sum of £500. Bishop Ryder of Gloucester, and Bishop Bathurst of Norwich, became vice-presidents in 1815.

Amongst other difficulties which hemmed the earlier part of this Society's path, and which continued even after it received Episcopal patronage, was the maintaining of its independence. Its evangelical spirit was its life; and it could allow of no interference affecting that. There were many struggles to uphold its character in this respect, and at length it formulated the following principles, and placed them publicly in front of its proceedings. "First, that it is essential to the welfare of this Society that it should prosecute its objects distinct and separate from all other societies; and secondly, that it is important that all the different associations of the C.M.S. should maintain their independent existence without merging in any Church union."

The London Jewish Society was another fruit of evangelical zeal. So many clergymen who felt its power coupled with it, as we have noticed, much interest in the study of prophecy, particularly in reference to the house of Israel, whose restoration to the Holy Land was confidently expected. On broader grounds they erected their Institution, and they appeared the first to undertake special work for the conversion of God's ancient people. The Society commenced in 1808; and the objects contemplated

were to relieve the temporal distress of the Jews, and to promote their spiritual welfare. In 1818 they began foreign work by despatching missionaries to Poland; and, three years afterwards, they founded a seminary for educating converts fitted to be employed as agents. About the same time, a Hebrew edition of the Scriptures was prepared for Jews generally; a Judeo-Polish for the Jews in Poland; and a Syriac version for Cabalistic Jews.

Missionary work thus went on through the years embraced within the present volume, and during the same period Evangelicalism was promoted at home by the quiet endeavours of those who were identified with it. Wilberforce much lamented the state of things which existed in the parish churches of England. "It is my fixed opinion," he said, "formed on much reading, consideration, and experience, that there has been for many years, among the majority of our clergy, a fatal and melancholy departure from the pure principles of Christianity and of the Church of England, from those principles which prevail through her articles, her liturgy, the writings of her venerable and of many of her brightest ornaments. I am not speaking of speculative matter; this declension, or if I would give it its true name, this heresy, is important because its practical effects are in the highest degree mischievous." "In selecting a minister for any living, it is not enough to know that he is diligent and exemplary in his conduct, nor yet that his talents, knowledge, and manner of officiating are everything that one could wish, but I must ask, what are his doctrines?" Wilberforce was extremely

particular in the use of Church patronage, and in the employment of his influence in appointments to livings. Simeon was so anxious on this point, that he exerted himself in the establishment of a permanent provision for securing incumbencies for Evangelical clergymen. A trust bearing his name was instituted for purchasing livings for such persons. "In the name of God," he said, in prefacing the terms of his trust, "and in the presence of Almighty God, I give the following charge to all my trustees, and to all who shall succeed them in the trust to the remotest ages. I implore them for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and I charge them also before that adorable Saviour who will call them into judgment for their execution of this trust." The charge was that they should bestow the livings entrusted to them upon those, and those only, who preached the gospel according to what are called "Evangelical principles."

Much which has been described in this chapter clustered round Clapham Common; there was a minor centre of Evangelical society at Barley Wood. Hannah More bound round herself two circles, generally looked at as quite apart—Dr. Johnson, Soame Jenyns, Horace Walpole, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Oliver Goldsmith of the eighteenth century, and William Wilberforce, with numerous Evangelical clergymen, of the nineteenth. She lived to be eighty-nine, and died in 1833. Thornton, as well as Wilberforce, was one of her chosen friends; and she gathered round her, at different dates, Bishop Barrington, Bishop Porteus, Bishop Burgess, John Newton, Rowland Hill, William Jay, and many more.

Evangelical Church people had not the horror of excitement which prevailed throughout the orthodox party. Some clergymen belonging to the class were most impassioned in the pulpit. Charles Simeon could be as vehement as John Knox. Instead of the black covered MS., daintily placed on a velvet cushion, there might be seen a small Bible in the clergyman's hand, whilst he preached memoriter or extempore. Lively tunes were allowed, to which hymns by Watts and Doddridge were loudly sung in some chapels of ease. Cottage lectures came into fashion. Even prayer meetings were held. And the Bible and Tract anniversaries having led the way, large and animated gatherings having occurred in London, under the presidency of royal dukes and right reverend prelates, an imprimatur was stamped upon what some had called irregular proceedings. Consequently the impetus given throbbed far and wide, and anniversaries of auxiliary and branch societies became common in provincial towns and rural districts. Simeon and Richmond travelled from the southern coast to the border country, stirring up congregations to works of faith and labours of love. Anecdotes were related, a little humour was sprinkled over devout addresses, cheers were not repressed—and a good deal was allowed upon which many bishops, deans, prebendaries, and rectors frowned with displeasure. In some instances three or more anniversaries would be crowded into one week. The Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society, the Jews' Society, followed day after day. People came from a distance on a visit to sympathetic friends.

Excitement on one subject increased excitement on another. The whole week was holy unto the Lord —a prolonged festival to which clergymen and their families, with numbers of Christian ladies, looked forward with eager expectancy all the year round. Nevertheless, a tone of high *respectability* pervaded all that was done. Excitement did not rush into riot. A wide distance still remained between such scenes of "religious enjoyment" and the "vulgar extravagance" of Methodist camp meetings.

CHAPTER V.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH (*continued*).

1800–1830.

NOT long ago, on a Sunday afternoon, the Earl of Beaconsfield met the late Dean of Westminster within the abbey precincts, and expressed his desire to witness the service which had just commenced. The Dean, who occasionally, instead of occupying his stall, mingled with the congregation, to witness the effect produced by the service, was on the point of entering the north door. He and the visitor, without being recognised, pressed through the crowd, and approached the pulpit near enough to hear the preacher. When they came out, the earl expressed his astonishment at seeing such a multitude in the choir and transepts, at the attention they paid to the discourse, and at the becoming manner in which the prayers were read, and the psalms and anthems chanted, in contrast with the miserable attendance and the slovenly worship which he had seen there half a century before.

Things were different indeed at that earlier period. A few candles might then be glimmering here and there on a winter's afternoon ; whilst a dozen or two strangers were scattered about the choir, as surpliced

clerks performed their office in a manner the most perfunctory and unedifying. The idea of throngs crowding the nave and listening to animated discourses on a Sunday afternoon or evening would have been deemed by Dean and Chapter utopian and methodistical.

The annals of the abbey between 1800 and 1830 chiefly consist of dates when distinguished persons were buried. The interments included Pitt, Fox, and Canning, whose names tell a story more eloquent than pages of well-turned sentences; but the records of death—which is the staple of the history—do but typify abbey services and their effects for many a long year.

The decease of Dean Ireland in 1816 may detain us for a moment, to hear what is said of him by his schoolfellow—Gifford, first editor of the *Quarterly*.

"With what feelings do I trace the words, 'the Dean of Westminster.' Five-and-forty springs have now passed over my head since I first found Dean Ireland, some years my junior, in our little school at his spelling-book. During this long period, our friendship has been without a cloud; my delight in youth, my pride and consolation in age. I have followed, with an interest that few can feel, and none can know, the progress of my friend from the humble state of a curate to the elevated situation which he has now reached, and in every successive change have seen, with inexpressible delight, his reputation and the wishes of the public precede his advancement. His piety, his learning, his conscientious discharge of his sacred duties, his unwearied zeal to promote the interests of all around him, will be the theme of other times and other pens: it is sufficient for my happiness to have witnessed at the close of a career, prolonged by Infinite

Goodness far beyond my expectations, the friend and companion of my heart in that dignified place, which, while it renders his talents and his virtues more conspicuous, derives every advantage from their wider influence and exertion."[1]

Lord John Thynne became sub-dean at the close of the period before us, and he ought to be mentioned as amongst the earliest dignitaries who broke up traditionary habits of indifference. "In earlier times, it may be from the gradual steps of the increase in the population around it, the abbey of Westminster had taken little heed of the multitudes which at last pressed upon it with an intolerable burden. He was the first who recognised the fact, that to this vast neighbourhood the abbey had a duty to perform. Long ago, before any public attention had been called to the need, he urged the wants of the surrounding parishes on those concerned; and it was owing to his incessant exertions that thousands were given to the support of churches which are now the standing witnesses of his energy."[2]

Lord John Thynne, sub-dean, died in 1881, after being in office fifty years.

The coronation of George IV. blazed in the edifice with a splendour which, however, presents no illustration of the religious life of England; the rejection of Queen Caroline from the door by Poets' Corner suggests nothing even pathetic, nothing but the

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[1] *Supplement to Stanley's Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, p. 105.

[2] *Dr. Stanley's Sermons on Special Occasions*, p. 270.

recollection of a fierce political storm raging round the venerable walls.

The abbey was much neglected; no watchful care, no enthusiastic love, marked the custodians of the national temple; and when attention is turned to St. Paul's, there is little to relieve very dreary impressions.

The *Annals of St. Paul's*, by the late Dean Milman, tell us of the funeral of Lord Nelson in 1805.

"The funeral of Nelson was a signal day in the annals of St. Paul's. The cathedral opened wide her doors to receive the remains of the great admiral, followed, it might almost be said, by the whole nation as mourners. The death of Nelson in the hour of victory, of Nelson whose victories at Aboukir and Copenhagen has raised his name above any other in our naval history, had stirred the English heart to its depths, its depths of pride and of sorrow. The manifest result of that splendid victory at Trafalgar was the annihilation of the fleets of France and Spain, and it might seem the absolute conquest of the ocean, held for many years as a subject province of Great Britain. The procession, first by water, then by land, was of course magnificent—at least as far as prodigal cost could command magnificence."

The building was never crowded, except when some great sight was to be seen. Other funerals follow without a word from the author which, in connection with St. Paul's, throws light on religious life during thirty years of this century. The most interesting incident that could be found was a robbery of sacramental plate of ancient workmanship in two chests, together with a Bible and Prayer-Book with chased silver covers. The incident is introduced with the remark, that the loss described was suffered, "not from

fanatic Iconoclasts, or fanatic Puritans, but from low London thieves; it is to be feared, though it was never proved, aided by accomplices within the sacred walls, and belonging to the establishment." The remark indicates the character of some cathedral servants of that day, and exhibits them as worse than "fanatic Puritans."

The noblest sacred edifices in the land were left in a deplorable condition, and even St. George's Chapel, Windsor, is described by an observer, a few years before the opening of the century, "as dirty and disregarded to such a degree as to become a nuisance to the eye and a reproach to the sextons, who, I am told, receive daily handsome donations for showing it."[1] A poor renovation attempted by command and at the expense of George III.; a window designed by West, and utterly out of keeping with the edifice; and a wood carving on the flap of a stall intended to represent, as Horace Walpole calls it, "the ineffectual martyrdom of George the King, by Margaret Nicholson";— all these alterations indicated the miserable taste then connected with what may be called the æsthetics of religion. What restorations took place in cathedrals were of a similar character. Puritans have been charged with labouring so effectually at Lichfield, as in other places, "that little further mischief seemed to be possible." Some mischievous work, however, was left to be done in 1788, at Salisbury and Hereford. The canons of Lichfield complained of

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 20th June, 1786, quoted in *Annals of Windsor*, vol. ii. p. 544.

cold, and the same gentlemen accordingly walled up the pier arches of the choir, and closed the eastern tower arch with a glass screen, "so as to convert the united choir and Lady Chapel into a long aisleless or apteral chapel." "It is satisfactory," the critic remarks, "to record that, after all this transformation, the canons still complained of cold."[1] Precedents set before the end of the eighteenth century were but too carefully followed in the nineteenth, and showed the absence of all right feeling in what pertained to sacred art. The "motive" was mere convenience, in connection with tawdry show; and even with respect to convenience, wretched alterations proved unsuccessful. Congregations were miserably small, except on festivals, when some civic pageant occurred. In rare contrast with the scattered few at other times, multitudes would congregate on such occasions, to see the mayor and corporation march down the nave, perhaps over a matted carpet of green rushes, to a tune on the organ, which blocked up the arch at the entrance of the choir.

Old parish churches fared little better than cathedrals, being for the most part neglected, dirty, dismal; and when restorations were ventured upon, they followed the Wyatt type. Several English edifices, worthy of being cathedrals, now restored in a more appropriate manner, were then in a wretched condition, though no neglect could destroy their general magnificence and beauty. To mention two specimens —not because they are among the best, but because they are associated with my early recollection—St.

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[1] *Murray's Handbook to the Western Cathedrals*, p. 269.

Nicholas' Church, Yarmouth; and St. Peter's, Mancroft, Norwich. A new spire was erected at Yarmouth in 1807; and as an example of parliamentary control over such matters, an Act had to be obtained for the purpose. The ancient design of the roof—where the compartments between the ribs and bosses were studded with golden stars—was destroyed, and the whole painted like dark marble, veined with white! The lower part remained much as before, except where decay and neglect had done effectual mischief. There was a pulpit level with the vicar's pew, and an alderman's gallery with a gilded canopy, and the royal arms over his worship's seat. Thither went the corporation magnates on a Sunday morning, filling the gallery with scarlet and purple gowns, the procession along the streets before and afterwards exciting more interest than the service which came between. A far different scene might be witnessed on a Sunday afternoon, when rows and rows of coffins were placed in the churchyard, awaiting the arrival of a curate, who had the remains of the departed brought into the church. A pause occurred after the words, "the trumpet shall sound,"—when a trumpet stop in the Dutch organ pealed out its note through the many-aisled building, much to the delight of boys and girls, who hurried away after this part of the performance. St. Peter's, Mancroft—correctly described by Blomefield as "a noble, regular freestone fabric, the best by far of any parochial church in the city"[1]—was the glory of our Anglican capital; the

[1] *History of Norwich*, vol. ii. p. 191.

music of the bells in the tower and in the chimes of the old clock, the magnificence of nave and aisles, chancel and transepts, and the side chapels and monuments, were the citizens' pride, not to speak of "the noble standing cup and cover, chased with the story of David and Abigail," which appeared on the Communion table. The mayor's pew, with standards supporting sword and mace, formed a conspicuous object in that, as in other like edifices. There was little to attract and edify when service was performed. Happily, whatever might be the uneffaced stains of time, and the unrepaired effects of neglect, they could not destroy the interest attaching to the buildings themselves; but it was otherwise with hundreds of minor churches scattered over the country. The "pulpit," with two desks underneath, forming the "three decker," now laughed at, but then regarded with reverence; high pews in which people could conveniently go to sleep; a broad middle aisle, with benches for the poor; a gallery perched up so high that it touched the ceiling, with forms for little charity children where they could neither hear nor see; an undisciplined choir out of tune and time; an organ perhaps wretchedly played; and "the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown," somewhere or other conspicuously placed;—these were general features of churches three-quarters of a century ago.

New ecclesiastical buildings rose by degrees. Provision was made by Parliament for the purpose, local liberality being created by State assistance. As we have seen, a million was voted in 1813, and half a

million in 1824. Between 1801 and 1831, five hundred churches were built, at an expense of three millions.[1] Yet "during the long period extending from the commencement of the reign of George III. down almost to its close, there were not (including St. Alphage, and St. Mary, Whitechapel) six churches erected in the metropolis."[2] After that time the work was taken up with vigour. St. Pancras, New Road, was finished in 1822, a Greek structure copied partly from the Erechtheion, and partly from the Temple of the Winds at Athens, with an imperfect imitation of the Pandrosium and its row of caryatides. The architecture of pagan idolatry and the emblems of Greek female slavery were, as the morning of a better day was breaking, thought fit types for a building devoted to the honour of the true God and "the law of liberty." The interior corresponded with the outside—a range of verd-antique columns over the communion table were copied from the Temple of Minerva. Gothic edifices struggled into existence at Stepney and Chelsea in 1822 and 1824.

Of old chapels of ease, an example may be found in St. George's, Great Yarmouth, erected in 1714, by virtue of an Act of Parliament imposing a tax on coals. It has a cupola, and the roof inside is supported by ten Doric columns. A bad example of the same class—an ugly, barn-like-looking thing—may be seen on turning out of Brompton Row. Of newer edifices

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[1] May's *Parliamentary History*, vol. iii. p. 215.
[2] *London*, edited by C. Knight, vol. v. p. 202.

of this class, a dreary sample existed in Bedford Row, where Mr. Cecil and Daniel Wilson preached; but many about London were still worse, for example one at Bayswater, which in its pristine state is engraved in the *History of Kensington*, indescribable as to architecture, with an insignificant portico, and a bell in a box stuck on the roof; carriages are seen "setting down" the worshippers, who look as if they were entering a theatre. Altogether, it truthfully caricatures a certain phase of religious life in 1818.

A large number of district churches, both in London and the country, arose at the end of the time covered by this volume. They show, not only an increase of population, but an increase of religious zeal, and many of them also evinced a great improvement in artistic feeling. It accorded with a revival of activity and earnestness which set in as the first quarter of this century closed. The clergy woke out of a long sleep. If preaching was not eloquent, it was earnest. Pastoral exertion followed pulpit discourse, and a spirit of religious industry was diffused through increasing congregations. Psalmody underwent a change. Selections of hymns by clergymen were introduced. New tunes, some of them adaptations of glees and songs of the more serious kind, came into use, the most celebrated composer of this class being Clarke of Canterbury, who published three or four volumes of tunes. Some of these were pleasing, and powerfully expressed the sentiments of the hymns for which they were composed. Some performances which did not bear criticism were

"a concession to the flutes, and clarionettes, and 'the bass' of the village or choir." [1]

Before closing this brief review, it is not impertinent to notice a common characteristic of the clergy, which since the time referred to has been largely superseded. They did not then commonly aim at appearing as a sacerdotal class—as a distinct caste in the community. High Churchmen, whatever might be their asserted superiority in social circles, can scarcely be said then to have acted as priests, though the name was given them in the Prayer-Book. Confession and absolution were not common things in those days; and when they came to be asserted, they produced startling effects on the public mind. Surplices were almost unknown in the pulpit, and a crosier in the hands of a Bishop would have created great alarm. A clergyman could be known by his dress in the streets. Shovel hats, aprons, and gaiters were usual. The Bishop's wig was a marked piece of ecclesiastical dignity; but nobody in Protestant orders could be taken for a Roman Catholic. It was a true spiritual instinct which in later Jewish days led the nation to look at prophets as above priests. An opposite tendency began to appear in the second quarter of the present century.

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[1] Preface to *Break of Day*, by C. T. Rust.

CHAPTER VI.

SIGNS OF WHAT WAS COMING.

1800–1830.

BEFORE we turn from that which was going on within the limits of the Establishment, to look at that which took place in other directions, it is proper to inquire whether any signs appeared of great changes not far distant. In 1829 the Church of England was on the edge of a revolution the most startling. Two departures from old-fashioned ideas were very near—one, in the form of free inquiry, snapping asunder cables which bound the vessel of theological dogma to ancient moorings; another, in the way of returning to ideas and practices which had been generally abandoned ever since the Reformation three hundred years before. It is natural to feel some curiosity as to whether occurrences at hand cast any shadows before them. What can we discover indicative of preparations for issues which were just on the point of unfolding themselves?

Oxford, which played such a conspicuous part in the theological history of the Commonwealth, and on the rise and progress of Methodism, was a scene of the new movements. We can discover something of the inner life of the University in memoirs of dis-

tinguished men educated there early in this century. Dr. Hook, as a student within the walls of Christ Church, who along with the classics studied Shakespeare, and did not neglect some branches of theological knowledge,—underwent his examination for a degree, when a story got abroad that he cut jokes with his masters all the time. "They, however," he says, "behaved very good-naturedly to me except this morning, when one of them, to the great amusement of all the rest, made me prove the errors of the Roman Catholics in worshipping relics, and the folly of the Jews in wearing phylacteries, the absurdity of superstition and inutility of charms, all of which subjects I knew pretty well; *and this, with something about the doctrine of the Trinity, made up the whole of my examination in Divinity.*"[1] This little incident throws light upon what must have been the sort of theological training in those days for men destined to serve the Church, some in its highest offices. Of a previous period we are informed on the authority of Mr. Justice Coleridge[2]—"In our days the religious controversies had not begun by which the minds of young men at Oxford are, I fear, now (1843) prematurely and too much occupied; the routine theological studies of the University were, I admit, deplorably low; but the earnest ones amongst us were diligent readers of Barrow, Hooker, and Taylor."[3]

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[1] *Life of W. F. Hook*, p. 28. The letter in which this passage occurs is dated June, 1821.

[2] *Life of Dr. Arnold*, vol. i. p. 20.

[3] A different state of things is said to have existed in the sister University. "Nothing at Cambridge is so earnestly

The witnesses here cited in proof of the defective knowledge of Oxford students are of an unexceptionable class. There are controversies into which young men may prematurely plunge, but some wisely arranged course of theological study must surely have been needful for those who were to be clergymen. Nothing, however, of the sort seems to have existed ; they were left to their own resources, and only such diligent and earnest men as Coleridge, Augustus Hare, and Arnold, thought of looking into Barrow, Hooker, and Taylor, in whose writings at least all students for the ministry ought to have been drilled. The indifference as to theological study which then prevailed at Oxford is almost incredible. "There was then hardly such a thing as Biblical scholarship in the University," says a recent author of Reminiscences relating to the period.[1] "Of course it could have no place in the much-crowded, much-circumscribed preparation for the schools. Our Oriel tutors gave exceptional attention to our New Testament lectures, but these consisted almost entirely in our construing the original, and having occasionally to be corrected on some point of mere scholarship. I remember being told, as an incident of that very morning, that a very learned tutor of a neighbouring college had not opened his mouth once during the whole lecture,

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recommended as the perusal of general literature, except it be, which is absolutely necessary, the study of the evidences of Christianity, Paley, Butler, etc." Letter of Maurice, Oct., 1823, *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. i. p. 48.

[1] *Oriel College and the Oxford Movement*, by T. Mozley, M.A., vol. i. p. 177.

except to observe on the words 'Draw out now,' in the miracle of Cana, 'Whence we may infer that the Jews used "spigots."' In the degree of M.A., and for all the degrees in *theology* and law, there was then no more examination than there is for a bogus degree at Philadelphia. In point of fact, they were bogus degrees, and nothing more. The Regius Professors of Divinity did their best to revive theological studies; but when Lloyd collected a private class, it was to study the history and original sources of our Prayer-Book; and when Burton took his place in that practice, it was to study Eusebius, and the Primitive Church. When any preacher went out of the text of Scripture, it was generally for some paradox, or some oddity, to strike and fix the attention, or a sort of five minutes' wonder. Tyler had a decided turn for the picturesque and quaint. To illustrate the absolute sanctity with which the Jews regarded the Temple, he quoted a strange Rabbinical story. Along all the lines of the cornice and roof there were wires in such complete communication that not a sparrow could light on any part without setting 6,000 small bells tinkling. As may be supposed, a responsive titter rose through St. Mary's." Reminiscences at a distance of fifty years are open to some suspicion; but in substance this account, supported as it is by other evidences, cannot be set aside. The theological education at Oxford must have been exceedingly meagre. No pains were taken to instruct the rising clergy beyond what was required for educated laymen. Youths brought up under such a system might well become victims of error.

There was nothing in it to preserve them from false religion, scarcely enough to save them from the rejection of religion altogether. Certainly they were ill prepared to meet and resist theological perils with which they soon came in contact.

The most profound patristic scholar at Oxford, just before the great movement, was Dr. Routh, president of Magdalen; but he does not seem to have contributed anything towards it, or to have done anything which would guard men against it. He had no tendencies which led him either way. He was a curious archæological scholar, an easy-going man it appears, neglecting discipline, and leaving things to take their own course. It is quite clear that influences were at work tending to unsettle existing opinion, without sufficient care being taken to guard against the abuse of free inquiry. Oriel College could boast of several remarkable men, destined to take part in discussions and controversies which at the time they did not anticipate. "The New Oriel sect," says Mr. Mozley, "was declared to be noetic, whatever that may mean; and when a Fellow of the College presented himself in the social gatherings of another Society, he was sure to be reminded of his pretence to intellectual superiority." Whately was a decidedly orthodox divine, yet he had habits of talking which, whilst they stimulated inquisitiveness, did not adequately supply caution and guidance. He regarded, says the authority just quoted, High Church and Low Church as equal bigotries. "In the Evangelical scheme he saw nothing but a system of dogmas framed to create a groundless self-confidence and to

foster spiritual pride. The man inwardly sure of his own salvation, and of his Christian sufficiency, and equally sure of the damnation of most people around him, particularly of those he did not like, Whately used to compare to the self-sufficient Stoic of the Roman satirist. Such a man was naturally indifferent to further knowledge and improvement, being indeed as good as he need be, and only in danger of being so good as to rely on his own merits. Even though the Evangelicals had their favourable side in their affinities with the Nonconformist body, and, upon their own principles, had little to say to formularies, and even to creeds, still Whately had far less respect for them than for the old High Church, for it was learned and cultivated, and it could appeal to something more than those incommunicable sensations which it is impossible to reason upon. St. Edmund Hall was then the headquarters of the Evangelical system. It is difficult to convey an idea of the very low position it had in the University; and it is even painful to recall it, for it was religion in the form of a degradation utterly undeserved. There were in most of the other colleges one or two men who inherited or imbibed sympathy with the despised sect. But to Whately, in his lofty eminence of free speculation, the Evangelical system as presented at Oxford was below contempt.[1] If there were differences between him and Newman when they came to work together, it must have arisen from Newman's deep convictions in favour

[1] *Oriel College*, etc., by Mozley, vol. i. p. 23. His reminiscences need to be read with caution.

of the Evangelicals, while Whately could only feel the obligation of a common Christianity. Whately dealt more freely with the Ten Commandments than I had been accustomed to. He strongly deprecated the prevalent idea of the Sunday taking the exact place of the Jewish Sabbath, or being properly called the Sabbath. But any one coming to Oxford from the country at that time would have received a little shock to his provincial strictness. It often occurred that on Sunday there was an unusual muster at the High Table and in the common room, of strangers as well as men of the College. In order to escape this, there were occasionally private dinners, which some would think worse. Sunday was thus a feast day." It is apparent that the writer has a prejudice against Whately, and he looks at the whole state of things through coloured spectacles ; but no doubt his account is substantially correct, and much which he says about Whately is in harmony with what may be gathered from his earlier writings. A perfectly accurate and equitable judgment of Oxford fifty years ago can scarcely be expected from any one studying there then ; and therefore we are left to make the best use we can of what we are told, and to read with discrimination reports of that critical period.

It would seem that certain opinions with regard to the Trinity were broached, of a character deemed heretical by orthodox divines. Lectures, named after Dr. Bosworth, who had left money for their being read every year in College Chapel, explained the word *person* in the Athanasian Creed, the Litany, and the Communion Service, as meaning

representation.[1] The impression, it is said, was left, that the second person was representative of the Father's mercy; and the third of His sanctifying power;—the theory bearing some likeness to the Sabellian heresy, which denied any essential distinction in the Godhead, and resolved what is taught respecting Father, Son, and Holy Ghost into differences of operation. But things were done beyond the questioning of Nicene doctrine. Frank Edgeworth, a Cambridge man, half-brother of the famous lady novelist, Maria Edgeworth,—he whom Carlyle describes as "learned in Plato, and likewise in Kant, well read in philosophies and literatures, entertaining not creeds, but the ghosts of creeds,"[2]—visited Oxford, and talked there in the following way, a way more fashionable now than it was then:—"Yes, undoubtedly there is truth; it is most desirable—indeed, necessary; it is quite discoverable and ascertainable. But it is not confined to certain narrow limits of space and time. It is in all things and everywhere. The truth meets us in all sayings and all doings. There is nothing from which we may not extract truth. Granting all you say about the traditions of one remote corner of the world, and one race of no figure in history, only discovered to be conquered, enslaved, absorbed, or scattered,—granting all that, why, is not truth, human and divine, to be found also in the traditions of Greece and Rome in which we have been educated, and which are part of our very being?"[3]

[1] Mozley, vol. i. p. 21.
[2] Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling*, p. 114.
[3] Mozley, vol. i. p. 46.

This young man was an example of broad culture existing in the University of Cambridge, but he also presents an unfavourable specimen of some studies pursued there at that time.

Far outside the Oxford Oriel common room, or the garden walks at Trinity and St. John's, Cambridge, were theories of a revolutionary kind, theological, political, and social, broached by popular authors elsewhere, whose writings attracted attention from a wide circle of the reading public. Godwin's *Political Justice*, and his *Caleb Williams*, overturned old-fashioned opinions lying at the foundation of Church and State. Bad people were with great ability portrayed as victims of outward circumstances, and a condition of society was represented so as to look desirable, in which every man was to think and act very much as he pleased. Shelley's poetry, with a wonderful blaze of genius, fascinated the imagination of the young, and opened visions which, to say the least, led astray from "old paths." This went on beyond the precincts of colleges and churches; and it certainly insinuated influences, not always suspected, through chinks and crannies in the high walls which surrounded those sacred enclosures.

Such a state of things prepared for further unsettlement; within Universities and the national Establishment, men of intellectual power and early piety were drifting into currents of rationalistic scepticism. Blanco White, a young Spanish priest who came over to this country and joined the Established Church, attacked Roman Catholicism, and became something of a Protestant hero, joining the Evangeli-

cal party for a time, and then leaving it to become a Socinian, and afterwards to adopt extreme rationalistic sentiments. His works now are little known, but sixty years ago he was a man greatly talked about; and with much, it would appear, to render him popular, he ultimately contributed to the promotion of sceptical opinions. John Sterling was a man of different character, who, by his intellectual power, and unaffected piety, attached to himself numerous literary friends. He came too late to do anything to forward the commencement of the new philosophical era, and was taken away too soon to help on its progress, but he affords a striking example of that state of religious speculation which was setting in before 1830. The representations of him given by Julius Hare and Thomas Carlyle are not alike, but both show that there must have been something in Sterling very beautiful. After a college life at Cambridge of great promise, and a transient, hopeful ministry at Hurstmonceaux, where he assisted his friend Hare, he devoted himself to other than clerical pursuits, lost his hold upon the gospel, got surrounded by thick fogs of doubt, and passed away in early manhood, to the sorrow of his friends. Contemporary with this kind of change there sprung up a reaction against it, and against other things besides; and this antagonistic movement produced a revival of ideas, sentiments, and practices long neglected, and by most people nearly forgotten.

A gifted poet arose at Oxford, John Keble, and he published his *Christian Year* in 1827. "It is not necessary, and scarcely becoming, to praise a book

which has already become one of the classics of the language. When the general tone of religious literature was so nerveless and impotent, as it was at that time, Keble struck an original note, and woke up in the hearts of thousands a new music, the music of thought long unknown in England." [1] He found new and beautiful meanings in the works and ways of God, and sung them with a witchery which led captive many outside, as well as within, the Established Church. Opening nature and providence with that key, he applied it also to the Bible, to Church institutes in general, and to sacraments in particular, so as to pave ways for a return of English minds to the fields and gardens of a new region of High Churchism. But he was far less a man of action than of sentiment—one not much fitted to be leader of a great movement, destined to sweep within it, if not "one third," yet certainly a large portion of the Episcopal Church. What Keble lacked, two others supplied.

First, Richard Hurrell Froude, a pupil of Keble's. He seems to have been a man of rich endowments, natural and acquired; and he must have had great charms of character, gentleness, tenderness, playfulness, elastic force, versatility, winning considerateness,—in short, just those qualities which enable one man to gather others round him. [2] By the year 1829 he had reached a very advanced development of the following kind:—"He professed openly his admiration of the Church of Rome, and his hatred of the Reformers. He delighted in the notion of an

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[1] Newman's *Apologia*, p. 77. [2] *Ibid.* p. 85.

hierarchical system, of sacerdotal power, and of full ecclesiastical liberty. He felt scorn of the maxim, 'The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants'; and he gloried in accepting tradition as a main instrument of religious teaching. He had a high, severe idea of the intrinsic excellence of virginity; and he considered the blessed Virgin its great pattern. He delighted in thinking of the saints; he had a keen appreciation of the idea of sanctity, its possibility and its heights; and he was more than inclined to believe a large amount of miraculous interference as occurring in the early and middle ages. He embraced the principle of penance and mortification. He had a deep devotion to the Real Presence, in which he had a firm faith. He was powerfully drawn to the Mediæval Church, but not to the Primitive." This sketch, struck off in a few lines, brings vividly before us the portrait of Froude's mental and religious personality. He may perhaps be regarded as the first, the original worker in an ecclesiastical enterprise which will be described in the next volume. He stimulated another, greater than himself, without whom the effort might have come to nothing.

John Henry Newman was born and bred amidst Evangelical influences. Watts, Baxter, Scott, Romaine, Newton, and Milner were his earliest monitors. He read his Bible in the authorized version, the literary excellences of which he has eloquently extolled. Rome was anything but an object of admiration in early life; and in 1821 he wrote:— "The year of our Lord 1572 will ever be branded

with infamy, and recollected with horror as the date of this most barbarous and cold-blooded massacre"—the massacre in Paris on St. Bartholomew's Eve. And then he speaks of Catherine de Medicis as conceiving this design, "so pleasing to the Court of Rome." At the same time he supported the Church Missionary Society, was secretary to the Oxford Branch, and highly esteemed the Evangelicals as devout and earnest men. He is described by one who knew him well as, in 1829, "more of an Evangelical than a High Churchman"; as being "always for a thorough religious conversion, with a real sense of it; a deep sense of the necessity of doctrinal truth, and an absolute devotion to its claims"; as having "the trappings of his old Calvinistic harness hanging about him"; and—which is more surprising still—as contributing to start the *Record* newspaper in 1828. "He wrote several papers on Church discipline in its various aspects."[1]

But a change was coming over J. H. Newman before 1830. He traces it himself, in an interesting manner, back to specific causes. Strange as it may appear, he mentions among them Whately, who afterwards so energetically combated his new opinions.

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[1] Mozley, vol. i. pp. 156, 224, 306. Since writing the above, I discover farther on in the same volume, p. 345, this curious statement: "At his own Church of St. Mary's was retained the custom, said to be from Puritan times, of handing the sacred elements to the communicants at their places down the long chancel, the desks of which, covered with white linen for the occasion, looked much like tables." I do not know whether this statement be questioned.

"What he did for me in point of religious opinion was first to teach me the existence of the Church as a substantive body or corporation; next, to fix in me those anti-Erastian views of Church polity which were one of the most prominent features of the Tractarian movement." Notions with regard to Church and State, condemning "that double usurpation, the interference of the Church in temporals, of the State in spirituals," employed by Whately for one purpose, were accepted by Newman for another. "For his special theological tenets," he adds, "I had no sympathy." It is curious to notice how opinions, the drift of which in the originator is one thing, may produce in the mind of a listener another effect quite different. So unconsciously may a man labouring to support a certain system contribute to the building up of its very opposite. The same things which were powerful one way in the mind of a future Archbishop, told very differently upon a future Cardinal. Keble's influence affected Newman deeply. "The sacramental system" of the poet, as Newman terms it—"that is, the doctrine that material phenomena are both the types and instruments of real things unseen"—was a key to unlock the door through which the latter walked, first into the Anglo-Catholic lobby, and next into the Roman Catholic hall. At the same time he changed his view of miracles. In 1825–6, he distinguished between the miracles of Scripture and those recorded as occurring in after-ages; he afterwards argued that since what had happened once might happen again, a certain probability attached to the idea of miracles in later times.

Amongst the formative influences of his new character, Newman gives a high place to his intimacy with Froude. He remarks, "It is difficult to enumerate the precise additions to my theological creed which I derived from a friend to whom I owed so much. He made me look with admiration towards the Church of Rome, and in the same degree to dislike the Reformation. He fixed deep in me the idea of devotion to the blessed Virgin, and he led me gradually to believe in the Real Presence." [1]

The man who, under these influences, was being prepared to take the lead in a great movement, found ultimately that they brought him where at first he did not mean to go. He was not far-sighted. In his beautiful hymn, "Lead, kindly light," he says: "I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me"—a sentiment devoutly wise in reference to providence and religious experience, but dangerous and misguiding as respects theological inquiry, to which I apprehend he intended to apply it. Tendencies of opinions adopted one after another need to be scrutinized, and results to be forecast, else inquirers may sink into pitfalls before they are aware. Newman was not far-seeing, but he was practical and constructive. He built up as he went on, and influenced others by his example and persuasion. The consciousness of his power came to him at last as the revelation of a secret. He did not know he had it until he had successfully exercised it. He began with a highly wrought Anglo-Catholic system, which, in his

[1] *Apologia*, pp. 70, 82, 87.

own hands, gradually assumed a Romanistic fashion. He worked hard to bring others into his own way of positive thinking. He had "a certain yearning to build as fast as men cast down, and to plant again the waste places. Something like a conspiracy there seemed to be—all the University thought that—but Newman had never liked a movement to destroy. He used to talk of the men who lash the waters to frighten the fish, when they have made no preparation to catch them."[1]

The revival of a strong Anglo-Catholicism, indeed the creation of a new form of it, more like the Catholicism of the Nicene age than had ever before appeared in England, thus originated in the University of Oxford, or amongst men who were its most active and earnest spirits. Cambridge had little to do with it. Hugh James Rose was a Cambridge man, but never a Fellow there. He was appointed select preacher in 1825, and Christian advocate in 1829. He first appears as a careful critic of German rationalism, in some sermons which he preached at Cambridge in 1825. He was amongst the earliest scholars of this country who devoted much attention to theological speculations, so rife amongst our Teutonic relatives; and whilst he deplored the aberrations from what he regarded as Divine truth going on in the land of the Reformation, he attributed the errors in Biblical criticism, religious dogma, and ecclesiastical history, in a great measure to the imperfect and unsound system of Church government existing in

[1] Mozley, vol. i. p. 20.

that country. This line of thought appears very significant, when taken in connection with what followed in Church history, as the Oxford movement took its rise. He was thinking of the want of discipline abroad; discipline which, according to his view, might have checked heresy and scepticism. Dr. Pusey, then a junior Fellow of Oriel, Oxford, who had been in Germany and familiarized himself with German forms of literature and opinion, thought, with a truer instinct, that the lamentable state of things there arose from intrinsic rather than extrinsic causes, from mental tendencies and perils rather than from circumstances, and especially from one great moral factor—the separation of dogma from spiritual life, of intellectual opinions from personal piety. Pusey deplored what went on as much as Rose could do, but he wished to be historically fair and just; and moreover he wished, as a salutary warning, to indicate the resemblance there was between the state of things just then in England, and the immediate antecedents of German rationalism.[1] Rose did not understand Pusey, and fancied that the latter excused what he really condemned. Pusey replied, explaining more fully his meaning, but afterwards withdrew his work from circulation.

What followed will be shown hereafter; in the meantime I may remark that the want of discipline in Germany led Rose to think of the want of discipline in his own Church, and so to prepare him for the part

[1] *Historical Inquiry into the Probable Causes of the Rationalistic Character lately Predominant in the Theology of Germany*

he took in the Oxford movement; but as to the share he had in it, he was not a representative of Cambridge sentiment to any considerable extent. High and dry orthodoxy, combined with mathematical studies and classical scholarship, characterized the Dons where Simeon was a great Evangelical power. Scholefield, Professor of Greek and incumbent of a parish church, was of the same school; so was William Carus, the friend and biographer of Simeon. These three, and some others, united in endeavours to raise the tone of religious life amongst undergraduates, and for this purpose had frequent meetings in College rooms. Henry Alford, afterwards Dean of Canterbury, was at Trinity from 1828 to 1832; and his journal at the time reflects Evangelical beliefs. He was a hard student, and sometimes felt "muddled between Thucydides and Æschylus, Virgil and Euclid, and the Binomial Theorem"; but he was at home, and full of joy, when hearing Simeon's sermons and receiving the Communion at the hands of Scholefield. He did not like all he heard at St. Mary's, and complained of "a tremendous long sermon, one hour and twenty minutes, so that men scraped with their feet."[1] There was a club at Cambridge, consisting of reading and thinking youths, called the Apostles, for the discussion of literary, historical, political, and philosophical questions. Alford, H. Arthur Hallam, and some surviving celebrities were members. The atmosphere they breathed must have been somewhat different from that of the Oriel room, and they had no Froude,

[1] *Life of Dean Alford*, by his Widow, pp. 36, 37, 61.

Keble, or Newman among them. But an unsettlement of opinions, orthodox and evangelical, was manifested at Cambridge even in those days. Notice has been taken of Frank Edgeworth, and of how he talked one day in Oxford. He had acquired that habit of speech at Cambridge. He was "full of Platonism," we are told, "in which his old Carthusian friend, Eaton, was taking a lead at Cambridge, as member of a Platonist club."[1] From all this it appears that there were admirers of Platonic philosophy at that time in the University who, so far, may be considered as walking in the Cambridge Latitudinarian steps of the seventeenth century. Yet a style of opinion, such as was expressed by Frank Edgeworth, must not, from all I can learn, be taken as typical of what existed there between 1820 and 1830. Rather it may be said that on the one hand a softening down of Calvinism, and on the other hand a lifting up of the religious tone and temper of the orthodox, went on hand in hand at that critical time.

Two men were at the University promoting the study of science, destined to take large effect afterwards; but so far from countenancing attempts made to set up discoveries in nature against Revelation, they were distinguished through life by a strong attachment to the latter. Adam Sedgwick became Woodwardian Professor of Geology in 1818, and was elected President of the Geological Society of London in 1829. William Whewell was made Professor of Mineralogy in 1828. They were amongst the main

[1] Mozley, vol. i. p. 44.

founders of that branch of modern science which has to do with the prehistoric changes in the globe, and their researches in stone records have given them lasting fame. They abandoned narrow interpretations of Scripture as to the earth and its history, and gave up traditional ideas of the formation of the world. When Keble was arguing that fossils and other remains in geological strata were products of an instantaneous act of creation, these investigators were discovering and explaining facts inconsistent with such a theory; at the same time they were upholding the Divine authority of the Old and New Testaments, and the harmony between them, when rightly understood, and the discovered secrets of physical nature. Sedgwick, and the same may be said of his contemporary, vindicated the teachings of natural, but not to the detriment of revealed, religion; nor had either of them any sympathy with Anglo-Catholic views revived at Oxford.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW RELIGIOUS ENTERPRISES.

1800–1830.

OUT of the Evangelical revival, including many Dissenters within its sweep, there sprung certain comprehensive institutions different from the movements just detailed, and these institutions not only developed into new religious social powers, but they were creative of others of a like order which have told upon the sentiment and life of our English Christendom far beyond what many persons apprehend.

A zealous Dissenting minister at Coventry—the Rev. George Burder—had for some time been in the habit of writing and circulating religious tracts, when, as early as 1799, he determined to do something of the same sort on a larger scale, and, for that purpose, called a meeting in St. Paul's Churchyard, London. At a second meeting, under the presidency of Rowland Hill, the Religious Tract Society was formed. Five Nonconformist ministers were on the committee, and the secretary appointed was Joseph Hughes, Baptist pastor at Battersea. The catholicity of his temper, his superior education, his large intelligence, and his skill in composition, fitted him

for the post. The fundamental principle laid down was, that in the tracts "there should be nothing of sectarian shibboleths, nothing to recommend one denomination or to throw odium on another." No doubt there is a *common Christianity* underlying the divisions of Christendom, otherwise the gospel would be a failure, and the hope of a multitude in heaven, which no man can number, would be a dream. Short, however, of that *common Christianity* which it is a comfort to every large-hearted believer to recognise, the Founders of the Tract Society saw ground for religious action in Evangelical truths acknowledged by numerous Churchmen and Dissenters. They placed these truths above systems of ecclesiastical discipline and worship. The doctrines which formed the foundation of the enterprise were not those in which either Anglo-Catholics on the one hand, or Latitudinarians on the other, could concur. The composition of tracts on human salvation was no easy achievement, and required, with the utmost desire of comprehensiveness, a definite outline of limitation. There was nothing to prevent Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians uniting in the effort, provided they held in common what were known as Evangelical views; consequently, though the Society originated chiefly with Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, they were afterwards joined by members of the Church of England.

Mr. Eyre,—a Homerton clergyman, who in Catholic movements went beyond his brethren,—Legh Richmond, and subsequently other well-known Evangelicals, joined in the work; so did Zachary Macaulay, father of

the celebrated historian. Wilberforce does not appear to have taken any share at first; but his *Practical Christianity* was placed amongst the Society's publications. Dr. Steinkopff, a well-known German clergyman, represented the Foreign branch of operations. When Legh Richmond became additional secretary, the institution became more comprehensive than ever. The services rendered by him were of great value. *The Dairyman's Daughter* and *The Young Cottager*, though not originally written for the Society's use, were early adopted under his sanction. His speeches at the annual meetings were always anticipated with desire, and heard with delight. His pleasant style, charming voice, and winning ways, made him a favourite with multitudes who attended from year to year. In one of the reports he narrated a fact respecting the impression made by the Society's tracts. A clergyman strongly prejudiced against their circulation, propagated injurious conceptions of their tendency, and did so before he had read one of them. He then thought of writing a tract against tracts, meeting his enemies on their own ground. For this purpose it was necessary that he should condescend to the perusal of at least a few. It happened that the result was not what he expected. The antagonist became a convert. He was so edified by the hated publications, that he embraced Evangelical views, wrote to Legh Richmond acknowledging the fact, and forthwith welcomed tract distributors to his parish as friends and allies.

In 1807 a gentleman named Stokes began to take a great interest in the Society, and devoted to it

much time and attention. He was very fond of abridging larger works, and, in some cases, of altering what he undertook to edit, after a fashion which does not commend itself in literary quarters at the present day. The labour which for many years he expended on engagements of this kind was most arduous, and his services, on account of their religious results, may be gratefully regarded even now by those who cannot approve of the methods which he adopted. In the year 1816, aid began to be rendered gratuitously by another gentleman, named Lloyd, who for more than twenty-five years continued to serve the Society he loved. The old premises in Paternoster Row, with a low ceiling, long window, shabby counter, and humble doorway, are recollected by a few aged friends. They can pleasantly recall the business superintendent who used to glance over the rails of his primitive writing-desk at one corner to greet the entrance of sympathetic visitors. A valuable addition to the staff was made at a later period in the person of Mr. William Jones, as travelling secretary—a man of rare social qualities, general intelligence, racy humour, true courteousness, and ready platform utterance. He at last retired from his profession as a solicitor to undertake the visitation of auxiliaries, and afterwards he became the chief secretary of the Society. It was a favourite notion in those days that the secretary of such a Society should carefully keep his ecclesiastical views a secret, so that wherever he went it might be difficult for any one to find out whether he were Churchman or Dissenter. A story is told of a debate respecting Mr. Jones, in which

different persons found it impossible to agree as to what he was, except that there could be no doubt of his being a sound Evangelical.

Auxiliary Societies were almost coeval with that which was founded at London in 1799. Darlington took the lead in this respect, and the principal towns in England speedily followed. Libraries for home and the colonies were commenced in 1817, and the loan system originated the next year at Wem, in Shropshire. The sale of tracts by colporteurs and hawkers was an early practice.

The Society soon began work abroad. Zachary Macaulay was requested, in 1800, to correspond with Continental Protestants, calling their attention to the subject. Yet, before this, a Society had been formed abroad, and in 1802 a correspondence commenced between Danish Christians and those in London. Brethren in Northern Europe said: "The Spirit of God seems to be bringing the true lovers of Christ among all parties nearer together, to unite their hearts by the bonds of brotherly love, and to pull down the walls of partition which were raised by particular opinions and modes of expression on matters of inferior moment. We endeavour to avoid in our writings all those peculiarities that are distinctive of this or the other party of Christians, and to speak plain Bible language, seeking to gain followers, not for men, but to our Saviour, and desiring to be of one spirit and one soul with the followers of Christ in all denominations."[1] Inspired with such

[1] *Jubilee Memorial*, p. 309.

sentiments, the London committee resolved that it was desirable to seize opportunities as they occurred for sending their publications to foreign parts.

Dr. Henderson, one of the most remarkable Hebrew scholars of the day, and a man full of missionary ardour, co-operated with Dr. Paterson and Dr. Pinkerton in the formation of Societies in Stockholm and Finland. Dr. Steinkopff, a few years afterwards, visited the Danish dominions on a like errand, and could report as the result, "I do not remember a single instance of any individual in power, to whom I have applied for liberty to do good, having refused me." I have often myself heard my honoured tutor, Dr. Henderson, speak of the favour and friendship shown him by royal personages in those northern countries, and of the assistance they afforded in his religious operations. Gradually the Society advanced, until Western, Central, and Southern Europe came within its widening sphere, and tracts were sent to the far East, to Australian colonies, to Polynesian islands, and to various parts of the Western Hemisphere.[1] And before we leave the earlier story of this new organization, it should be noticed that not only did it accomplish a constantly progressive course of action on its own lines, but it gave unexampled breadth to an old and recognised department in literature, and led to the multiplication of tracts of all kinds,—the name became a fashion, and was adopted in the learned retreats of Oxford.

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[1] For the history of the Religious Tract Society, see *Jubilee Memorial*, edited by William Jones, secretary.

The British and Foreign Bible Society sprung out of the Tract Society, and was formally organized on the 7th of March, 1804.[1] A meeting in the London Tavern, Bishopsgate, at which the Society was established, appears, from an account given by one present,[2] to have been an extremely humble affair. Distinguished persons invited declined to come. Granville Sharp, then well stricken in years, occupied the chair. Assembled round a table there were a few friends, including two or three Quakers, who from the first warmly espoused the cause. A clergyman entered the room, and used to say afterwards to the person who has described the gathering, "I came to see what you Dissenters are about." He attentively listened, and then delivered an impressive speech on the value of the Bible, and the importance of its circulation. This clergyman was John Owen, who became one of its secretaries. Mr. Hughes was its first secretary, as well as a founder of the Tract Society, and to him is attributed the origin of the comprehensive plan of circulating the Bible throughout the world. He took precedence of Owen in the conception and practical promotion of the work. Owen was not a convert before the first meeting, of which really Hughes was the originator, but he vied with his friend in zealous advocacy, and two more attractive and persuasive supporters never appeared on any platform. Owen used to remark in after years, relative to the small

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[1] See *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 421.

[2] Mr. W. A. Hankey, the banker. The account is given in the appendix to Leifchild's *Life of Hughes*.

meeting at the London Tavern, that it was a day to which posterity would look back, "as giving to the world, and that in times of singular perturbation and distress, an institution for diffusing on the grandest scale the tidings of peace and salvation; a day which will be recorded as peculiarly honourable to the character of Great Britain, and as fixing an important epoch in the religious history of mankind."[1] As Owen represented the Church of England and Hughes the Nonconformists, so Steinkopff represented foreign Churches. The committee consisted exclusively of laymen: six were foreigners, and the remaining thirty Churchmen and Dissenters in equal numbers. Lord Teignmouth, afterwards included in the so-called "Clapham sect," was elected president. The Bishops of London and Durham became subscribers; and they, with the Bishops of Exeter and St. David's, were chosen vice-presidents. It was laid down at the commencement, as a fundamental rule, "that the only copies in the language of the United Kingdom to be circulated by the Society shall be the Authorized Version without note or comment." The Society soon received assurances of sympathy from Wales and other places, and inquiries at once began to be made respecting the necessities at home and abroad requiring attention. Demand rose with offers of supply, and the Society had thrown upon its hands more work than it knew how to execute. Juvenile and ladies'

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[1] Browne's *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. i. p. 11.

associations speedily followed. New premises were built in Earl Street, Blackfriars.[1]

Reports followed detailing operations as to the production and circulation of Scripture versions. Neither were the Propagation, nor the Christian Knowledge Society, then engaged in preparing any. This was a distinctive undertaking by the new institute; and since its origin in 1804, down to the present time (1882), it has sent forth nearly 250 versions, made by missionaries and others whom it has assisted, and whose productions have been printed at its gratuitous expense. Narratives of incidents illustrating the good done by circulating the Scriptures abound in the annual reports, full of picturesque beauty and pathetic sentiment; and if selections of them were placed in an appropriate literary setting, they would form a volume of rare interest.

Upon the death of Mr. Owen, in 1822, a clerical

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[1] In a review of the fifteen years' history of the Society, it is remarked: "It has now been ascertained by local inquiries—the exactness of which is vouched for by unquestionable authority—that there has existed in nations, professing to derive the principles of their faith and the rules of their practice from the Holy Scriptures, and in our own among the number, a scarcity, amounting in some cases even to a famine of the word of God. But for the existence of the British and Foreign Bible Society, it appears in a high degree probable that such inquiries would not have been instituted, and consequently that the malady would not have been discovered, nor any fit and adequate remedy applied. The fitness and adequacy of the remedy provided by the British and Foreign Bible Society have been demonstrated by evidences not less clear and incontrovertible than that by which the existence of the evil that called for one, has been exposed and established."—BROWNE'S *Hist.*, vol. i. p. 80.

successor was found in Andrew Brandram, a clergyman of robust constitution and character, of commanding presence, frank in manners, and full of platform power. Nor should the name of Greenfield be passed over. He was distinguished by a wonderful knowledge of European and Asiatic languages, and for several years edited Biblical works published by Mr. Bagster, of Paternoster Row. He was officially connected with the Society for not more than nineteen months, yet in this short space of time his varied talents had been brought into exercise in no fewer than twelve European, five Asiatic, one African, and three American languages; and after the commencement of his engagements, he had acquired a considerable skill in the following languages, with which he had been previously wholly unacquainted—the Peruvian, Negro-English, Chippeway, and Berber."[1]

In the foreign operations, Spain, Portugal, and Italy came first in order; next Greece, Turkey, and the Mediterranean isles. India also was regarded from the beginning. Nor was China forgotten. A version of the entire Scriptures was completed by Dr. Morrison in 1814. Cape Colony and Caffraria had attention given them; and a South African Bible Society was formed in 1820. The effort for Malagasse Scriptures occurred in 1826. Sierra Leone, and East and North Africa had been earlier taken up; and America (North and South), the West Indies, British Guiana, Australia, and the South Sea Islands, came within the range of operations. At

[1] Browne, vol. i. p. 120.

meetings of the committee, applications were received and grants were made; the hearts of good men felt joy and thankfulness at hearing the effect of Bible distribution all over the world. Those who are not personally acquainted with such proceedings can form no idea of the harmony which prevails amidst them still, and of the enjoyment inspired by reports from continental and heathen lands.

One of the most popular speakers at the annual meetings for five and twenty years was William Wilberforce. The gatherings used to be in Freemasons' Hall. Round the room were hung portraits of the masters of the craft. The signs of the zodiac, and other emblazonments, were also conspicuous. At the upper end was a capacious platform with the president's chair, leading up to which ran a long narrow passage, by the side of the left-hand wall, partitioned off to allow easy access for the speakers, including, for example, Lord Bexley, their president, Dr. Ryder, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, with his episcopal wig and apron, almost the only representative of the bench whose presence could be confidently expected. Several clergymen followed, such as Wilson, Bickersteth, and especially John Burnet, the Independent, a Scotchman settled at Cork, whose witty rhetoric not only swayed the rude democracy, but moved to laughter even prelates and noblemen.

The enthusiasm at those meetings was often very great, and perhaps a larger number of gentlemen of high social standing were then accustomed to attend than has been the case in later years, owing to the

usiness upon the possessors of wealth

e assembly at Freemasons' Hall, a few ngs were held in other parts of the city, suburbs. The Kensington auxiliary was established, and at first it extended over a wide district, including a considerable part of the metropolitan West End. Meetings used to be held in the Haymarket, when royal dukes took the chair, and attracted large attendances; but in the course of time, as the number of supporters increased, and the work enlarged, district branches were formed, and thus annual gatherings to hear speeches and pass resolutions were multiplied. All over the country auxiliary meetings became common.[1]

The Society, though pacific in spirit and practice, has in its time been involved in war; and during the years of its existence to which the present chapter is limited it was three times dragged into painful controversy. The first time was in 1810. Then Dr. Wordsworth, Dean and Rector of Bocking, wrote

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[1] In printed but unpublished memoirs of the late Thomas Brightwell, F.R.S., an honoured friend of mine, I find the following passage respecting the first meeting of the Society in Norwich, I think in 1811: "A day indeed, one that might be called a sign of the times; then were seen for the first time, united for one great object in the spirit of Christian union, Churchmen and Dissenters. Bishop Bathurst presided; and co-religionists of different shades of opinion joined hand in hand. Earlham Hall was made the headquarters of the deputation; and Mr. J. J. Gurney, the beloved and honoured host, gathered round him a numerous circle of friends to share in the pleasures of holy intercourse and Christian friendship."

a pamphlet, complaining that the Bible Society would damage the Christian Knowledge Society, and thus "impede and curtail the inestimable interests of piety, peace, and true religion." Presently Dr. Marsh, Margaret Professor, took up his pen, contending that the Christian Knowledge Institution was entitled to exclusive encouragement and support from members of the Establishment, and also giving a history of translations, with a view to ascertain in how many languages the Society had "been the means of preaching the gospel." His leading objection was that the Bible ought not to be circulated alone; and to this, besides replies by others, Robert Hall delivered an answer at a Leicester Bible Meeting.

"For my part," he said, "I am at an utter loss to conceive of a revelation from heaven that must not be trusted alone; of a rule of life and manners which, in the same breath, is declared to be perfect, and yet so obscure and incompetent, that its tendency to mislead shall be greater than its tendency to conduct in the right path; of a fountain of truth (and the only original fountain, as our opponents themselves allow) more calculated, when left to its silent operation, to send forth bitter waters than sweet. If these must appear to a candid and impartial mind untenable and contradictory propositions, then must the chief objections of our opponents fall to the ground, and their prognostics of danger from the operations of the Bible Society be pronounced chimerical and unfounded. Whoever weighs the arguments of our opponents must be convinced that they all turn upon the following supposition—that the Scriptures are so ambiguous and obscure, that, when left to themselves, they are more likely to generate error than truth, to foment division than to produce unanimity and agreement. If this

implies no reflection on the excellence of the Bible, and the wisdom of its Divine Author, what, I will ask, can imply such a reflection? And if this be not admitted, how is it possible for a moment to entertain a scruple respecting the propriety of giving them the most extensive circulation." [1]

Dr. Maltby seconded the attack of Dr. Marsh, only he drew up his forces in a new quarter. "His predecessor in the field had contended that, in giving the Bible alone, the Society had given too little. The object of this assailant was to prove that, in so doing, the Society gave too much. He contends that 'out of sixty-six books which form the contents of the Old and New Testament, not above seven in the Old, nor above eleven in the New, appear to be calculated for the study or comprehension of the unlearned.'" Again, amongst others, Robert Hall returned to the post of defence.

"That some portions of the Divine volume," he remarked, "are of more universal interest than others; that the New Testament, for example, has a more immediate relation to our prospects than the Old, is freely conceded; just as one star differeth from another star in glory, though they are all placed in the same firmament, and are the work of the same Hand. But to this restrictive system, this jealous policy, which would exclude a part of the word of God from universal inspection and perusal, we feel insuperable objec-

[1] I have heard that a zealous opponent of the Bible Society was made a canon of Peterborough for a pamphlet he wrote in that character. When the canon died, some years ago, a memorial of him was presented to the Cathedral in the form of a massive pulpit for the nave. In that pulpit a sermon was preached in April, 1882, for the Bible Society by the present Bishop, Dr. Magee.

tions; nor are we disposed to ascribe to any description of men whatever that control over Divine communications which such a measure implies. We are persuaded that no man possesses a right to curtail the gifts of God, or to deal out with a sparing hand what was intended for universal patrimony. If the manner in which Revelation was imparted be such as makes it manifest that it was originally designed for the benefit of all, we are at a loss to conceive how any man can have a right by his interference to render it inaccessible." [1]

These speeches by Robert Hall, apart from their eloquence, are specimens of the arguments and appeals which were the staple of addresses on Bible platforms in those days. They dealt with fundamental principles, they could not anticipate phases which the important subject has since presented, and they had not within reach those fields of wide and varied facts from which later advocates have gathered illustrations of the wonderful progress of the enterprise.

A second controversy ensued in 1825, proceeding from another quarter, and presenting an altogether different front. Evangelical men in Scotland were complainants; and they objected against the Society, that it allowed in some instances the circulation of Bibles with the Apocrypha. In reply, it ought to be considered, that Protestant Churches on the Continent, like the English Church, had been accustomed to append the Apocrypha to their Bibles, and were not prepared at once to relinquish the practice; and that in Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Switzerland, and France, it was held in veneration. Foreign Societies

[1] Hall's Works, vol. ii. p. 384.

were uneasy at the appearance of Bibles without books to which they had been accustomed, and such Societies complained of what they deemed mutilated volumes as unacceptable to their countrymen. The Society in London endeavoured in vain to secure the omission of the Apocrypha, but left the practical decision of the question in the hands of foreign friends. No edition of the English Scriptures, adopted and issued by the Society at home, has ever contained the Apocrypha; its inclusion has been allowed only where the Scriptures could not be circulated without it. It was, therefore, a question of communicating the Bible in this manner, or not at all.

The difference of opinion on this subject at that time was very serious. The opposition from without was much less alarming than this schism within. To adopt a well-known figure, the Society seemed likely to resemble a tree split by a wedge formed from its own timber.

Resolution after resolution was adopted with the view of meeting scruples; a final resolution was passed by a special committee, and then submitted to the general committee as forming the basis of regulations afterwards adopted at two annual general meetings.[1]

As the controversy on the Apocryphal question is

[1] "That the funds of the Society be applied to the printing and circulation of the canonical books of Scripture, to the exclusion of those books and parts of books which are usually termed Apocryphal; and that all copies printed, either entirely or in part, at the expense of the Society, and whether such copies consist of the whole, or of any one or more of such books, be invariably issued bound, no other books whatever being bound

still agitated in some quarters, I think it necessary to introduce this fundamental rule.

The auxiliary Societies in Scotland, with few exceptions, withdrew from their parent in consequence, not being satisfied even with the resolution I have now quoted. They formed an organization of their own; but long since, I am able confidently to say, the unpleasant feelings engendered long ago, passed away. At the Wycliffe commemoration in Edinburgh, which I attended at the request of the two Societies, a resolution of sympathy from London was accepted in a brotherly spirit akin to that in which it had originated.

A third controversy arose in 1827, from an article in the *Quarterly Review* of that year, speaking depreciatingly of several versions. The versions selected were the Welsh, the native Irish, the Mohawk, Calmuc, Chinese, Turkish, and Bengalee. To these criticisms an elaborate reply was furnished by the Society's librarian, Mr. Platt, who engaged himself in drawing up an account of all the translations which down to that date had been circulated. It consists of twelve MS. volumes, and is preserved in the library of the new building, Victoria Street.

Another comprehensive effort was proposed, and it certainly had an almost Utopian look; this was to conduct Sunday schools on a harmonious system, to unite different denominations in teaching children religious truth. It was accomplished.

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with them; and, further, that all money grants to Societies and individuals be made only in conformity with the principle of this regulation."

The name of Gurney, in connection with short-handwriting, is familiar to everybody, from the peer of the realm to the common reader of parliamentary reports. Thomas Gurney, Joseph Gurney, and William Brodie Gurney appear in a regular line of stenographic as well as natural descent. But few outside a limited circle recognise the last of these persons as a distinguished Sunday-school teacher, and one of the founders of the Sunday-school Union. He liked to tell of having, when a boy, seen John Howard; and how, when a young man, he was fired with the ambition of pursuing another walk of benevolence, not inferior in its issues to prison reform. He saw thousands and thousands of children dragged up in ignorance and infamy, and he sought, after the example of Robert Raikes, to deliver them from their evil destiny. He went even further, and aimed to improve the system as well as to do the work. He had, week by week, at Mazepond a school of "the raggedest colts that were ever got together"; but in 1803 he gathered at his father Joseph's house several other school teachers like-minded with himself, and they projected a public meeting at which an organized Union was formed. He accepted the secretaryship with exuberant ardour; and on the committee were two other men, widely known afterwards in the religious world—James Nisbet, a publisher, and Thomas Thompson, a stockbroker—the first an intellectual-looking Scot, the second a bluff Englishman. They brought dissimilar qualities to bear on their common object. The object was to encourage themselves and others in Sunday-school work; to

attempt improvements in methods of teaching, and to promote the opening of new schools as opportunity offered. They wished to found what might be truly called a *Union*—not an aggregate of denominational schools of the same order, but a combination of school teaching for the employment of as many denominations as could enter into benevolent fellowship together. They laid down this principle: "The Sunday-school Union shall consist of teachers and others actively employed in some Protestant Sunday school; and any person thus employed being desirous of joining this Union, on signifying the same through any member of the committee, shall be admitted a member of the Union."

The practice had been adopted in some instances of teaching boys and girls to write; but the Union regarding its work as religious, thought that secular instruction should be cultivated at another time and in another way. The aim throughout was to advance *spiritual* education. Means then adopted in Sunday schools were so imperfect, that it required a large amount of study and labour to raise the standard and to devise corresponding details. They published various reading books and lessons, and for a while they kept in store the Church Catechism, the Westminster Catechism, and others; but all these were at length dropped—an unsectarian motive suggesting first the inclusion, and afterwards the abandonment, of all denominational formularies.

From the commencement, the Union had its stated quiet gatherings. In 1812, however, the modest committee determined to face what is called the

religious world, and arranged for a public breakfast in May, a season then beginning to be filled up with Protestant festivals. The breakfast began at seven o'clock, and on this occasion clergymen and Dissenting ministers gathered together in goodly numbers. Legh Richmond declared it to be the happiest event of the century, that there appeared a growing disposition among Christians of various names to unite in great and glorious undertakings. "For himself, some of the happiest moments of his life had been spent in intercourse with fellow-Christians of other Churches. In yielding to the influence of a spiritual central attraction, there was no compromise of conscientious attachment to particular views of doctrine and discipline." The breakfast was amazingly popular, and was afterwards commenced at an earlier hour, to allow of more time being devoted to the proceedings. I can remember how, in 1829, it began at the London Tavern in Bishopgate, as early as six o'clock, and by five the streets would be thronged with young men and women on their way to the festival, astonishing greatly the market-people who witnessed this strange display of religious zeal. Above 1200 persons managed to crush into one room. The breakfast was antedated and finished by six, when the speeches began amidst "thunders of applause." At an earlier period than my own recollections reach, the bluff form of Mr. Butterworth, member for Coventry, was a familiar presence. The Independent minister of Bedford, Mr. Hilyard, was sure to be there, and as sure to have something to say of his predecessor, "the glorious dreamer." The

speech of Legh Richmond was always an object of interest. He related some of the stories he afterwards turned into popular tracts, particularly that of "The collier boy and his candle-box,"—founded on a frightful accident which occurred near Newcastle-on-Tyne; and on the circumstance of a poor little fellow being afterwards found dead, with his tin candle-box bearing the words, scratched with a nail, "Fret not, dear mother, for we were singing while we had time, and praising God. Mother, follow God more than ever I did." The exhibition of the candle-box illustrated the anecdote.

In 1814 District Unions were established. This was another perilous feat in the enterprise. How could four London conventions be held, to express opinions as to modes of teaching, and send representatives to report what they recommended to the parent committee, without collision, without disturbance? But all this was done. Down to 1830, and ever since, the district system has been maintained in harmonious operation. The regulations to the uninitiated have an intricate look, yet we are assured the machinery has worked smoothly and well.

The early publications issued by the Union were elementary in the extreme; but from 1819 to 1831 a steady improvement is manifest; still, however, it left in the distance such educational books as the Society in later days has made us familiar with.[1]

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[1] For the history of the Sunday-school Union, see Watson's *First Fifty Years of the Union*, and its *History and Work* by the same author, with his life prefixed.

A combined attempt to meet the infidelity of the lower classes was made shortly after the close of the first quarter of this century. In vulgar forms, which it is not now worth while to describe, infidelity had shocked the feelings of educated and respectable people, even though they might not have any strong love for Christianity. Publications were circulated which went so far as to make their authors amenable to the law. The Statute Book declared blasphemy to be a crime, and severe penalties were attached to its printed expressions. Indecent and immoral literature should be repressed, most people will admit; but the line between allowable argument against revelation, and what is intolerable to the Christian public, is so difficult to draw, and everything like persecution for the utterance of speculative opinions is so carefully to be avoided for the sake of Christianity itself, that, to say the least, what are called blasphemy laws are questionable parts of legislation. Some trials for profane and impious parodies did no credit to our laws or our religion. The trial of William Hone in 1817, for parodies on the Prayer-Book, was disgraceful to a court of justice, because, under cover of zeal for religion, political activity was really at work. What Hone had printed were pasquinades on George IV., but "I will declare to you," said Lord Ellenborough, addressing the jury, "my solemn opinion, as I am requested by Act of Parliament to do, under the authority of that Act, and still more in obedience to my conscience and my God,—I pronounce it (the parody in question) to be a most impious and profane libel. Hoping and

believing that you are Christians, I doubt not that your opinion is the same."[1]

Hone's acquittal made him popular, and brought no little dishonour on his judges, the result being altogether what no Christian man could contemplate with satisfaction. Hone afterwards became a sincere believer in revelation ; and though never, as stated in some books, the minister of any Dissenting congregation, he did occasionally preach in a Dissenting pulpit. Distressed by the unblushing attacks of disbelievers, and persuaded that the Divine character of the Scripture could be infinitely better maintained and illustrated than by trials for blasphemy, a number of ministers and laymen united together to establish a Christian Evidence Society. The Society was of temporary duration, and has been succeeded by a much more comprehensive and effective one, but it did some good work at the time. Books and tracts, placing in a popular style proofs of the Divine origin of the gospel, were issued by the Society, and public meetings were held for the delivery of addresses on the same subject. I remember attending as a youth, on one of these occasions, at a chapel near Finsbury Circus, now pulled down, when the Independent minister, Dr. Bennett, and other brethren, defended the Bible against infidel assaults.

[1] Hone in his defence read parallel parodies—one said to be written by Dr. Law, Lord Ellenborough's father. "Sir, for decency sake forbear!" exclaimed the judge. The parody was withdrawn.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRESBYTERIANS.

1800–1830.

IT is now necessary to enter other fields of observation—to pass from the Episcopalian Church and Evangelical movements, in which many of the clergy had a share, to notice what was going on beyond these limits amongst different Dissenting denominations. The distinct stories to be told run in parallel lines as to chronology.

Repeated references occur to the "three denominations" in the annals of the last century. These "denominations" were the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist ministers in London, who, after the Revolution, had granted to them, as members forming a united body, certain privileges, amongst which was a right to approach the Sovereign on certain occasions. The institution still continues, with some changes hereafter to be pointed out. At the beginning of the present century it occupied an important position relative to measures in which Nonconformists generally were deeply interested. The religious bond between them was not strong; theological opinions held by the "three" were divergent; and at their usual meetings for business, they rarely united in

acts of worship. In the part they took respecting liberty, they acted on the whole harmoniously.

In describing the character and proceedings of each of the communities, I shall take the Presbyterians first, because they were the leading Nonconformists at the time of the Revolution, and precedence was commonly given to them by their brethren. At the close of the eighteenth century, those who bore the name of Presbyterians in the cities of London and Westminster—and the statement is applicable to similar ministers and Churches throughout the kingdom—were distinguishable in many cases from one another, but they may be roughly ranked under two divisions. Perhaps in some cases they were scarcely divided, as theological distinctions amongst them were faint, the boundaries shading off into almost imperceptible lines ; still, though tints on the edges resembled each other, in the centre appeared different colours. The names applied to the main parties were Arian and Socinian.

When we turn to study the opinions of the Nicene period, confessions by Arians and semi-Arians of that day are unsafe guides to the knowledge of what was believed by those who, in the year 1800, were generally classified under the Arian name. The great heresiarch from whom the appellation is derived, waged a violent war against the Athanasian watchword—*consubstantial,* indicating that the Father and the Son were of the *same* nature. He gave such prominence to the Son's subordination to the Father, as to teach a real inferiority, maintaining that the Son was not eternal, but was created by the Father out of

nothing. He said, "the Son of God was made out of that which had no prior existence; that there was a period of time in which He existed not; that as possessing free will, He was capable of virtue or of vice." This is the report of his opinions given by the Greek historian, Sozomen.[1] But Arius also believed that the Son created the world, and that He was the most glorious being in the universe next to the Father; "that by His own will and counsel He subsisted before all time, and before ages as perfect God, only begotten and unchangeable." Whatever these words, used by Arius,[2] may mean, some who agreed with him in denying the consubstantiality of the Son, taught by Athanasius, went further than Arius in attributing to Him honour and dignity. Those who assembled at the famous council of Ariminum in A.D. 359, described the Son as *like* to the Father in all things; adding, "as for the term substance, which was used by our fathers for the sake of greater simplicity, but, not being understood by the people, has caused offence, on account of its not being contained in Scripture, it seemed desirable that it should be wholly abolished, and that in future no mention should be made of substance in reference to God, since the Divine Scriptures have nowhere spoken concerning the substance of the Father and the Son."[3] Persons who adopted this phraseology were designated as semi-Arians, because they would not inscribe on

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[1] Book I. chap. xv.

[2] Theodoret, Book I. chap. v.

[3] Socrates' *Ecclesiastical History*, Book II. chap. xxxvi.

their doctrinal banner the word *homoïusios*, or consubstantial.

Some of those who went by the name of Arians at the close of the last century, might agree with Arius himself, or with those who framed the creed of Ariminum, intended to be conciliatory; but this is plain, that the persons I am now describing did not follow Athanasius—they rejected the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Dr. Price, who belonged to the second half of the eighteenth century, believed in Christ's pre-existence, rejecting the doctrine of our Lord's simple humanity; and if he did not agree with the Fathers at Ariminum, he did not go further than Arius in his anti-Trinitarian views. At the same time, it is to be remembered that he conceived the birth of Jesus to have been miraculous, and His character immaculate; that the Son of God voluntarily assumed human nature, and accepted the sufferings of the cross; that according to Saint Paul, "as the sacrifices under the law of Moses expiated guilt and procured remission, so Christ's shedding His blood and offering up His life, was the means of remission and favour to penitent sinners." He declined to speak of substitution or satisfaction, or in any way to define the Atonement of our Lord; but in an exalted sense he believed Christ to be the Saviour of the world.[1] That Dr. Price had followers amongst those denominated Arians, there can be no doubt. Shades of opinion resembling his were brought over by Presbyterians into the present century. Dr. Abraham Rees,

[1] See Price's Sermons and Appendix.

minister of the Old Jewry, probably approached closely to Dr. Price's opinions; for I have been informed on good authority—the authority of those who knew Dr. Rees—that when on his deathbed, in 1825, as the Atonement was put before him in strictly orthodox phraseology, he spoke to this effect: "Do not perplex a dying man. I am trusting for salvation to Jesus Christ." His chief theological publications were sermons, highly approved by Dr. Parr, who is reported as saying, "I have preached more than half of them. They guide and they animate me as a preacher; they satisfy me as a critic"; but though Parr was a clergyman of the Church of England, his commendation will not be taken as a proof of Evangelical light and fire in what he praised. There can be no doubt, however, that Dr. Rees was a devout and pious man; and though not a Trinitarian, he had views of Christ and His redemption approaching such as are held by the orthodox. It may be remarked that his literary reputation rests on his voluminous *Cyclopædia*, which, though superseded by recent publications, is still a monument of immense industry, and sometimes meets a want where other dictionaries fail. Memories of his dignified presence, gracious demeanour, and urbanity of disposition lingered in Nonconformist circles a few years ago, and stories were told of the marked notice taken of him by George IV., when he went up at the head of the denominations to address the Sovereign on his accession. He was one of the last distributors of the *Regium Donum*, and always defended the acceptance of that payment as continuing to be virtually what it was

in form and fact originally—a royal gift. Next to Dr. Rees may be ranked the minister of Carter Lane, Mr. Tayler, the last survivor of Dr. Doddridge's students. He did not adopt the opinions of his honoured master, but he cultivated much of his spirit and temper, and loved to relate anecdotes illustrative of his peculiarities. I knew well his daughter and son-in-law, the late Dr. Burder; and whilst the former delighted to repeat what her father related respecting Doddridge, the latter, who was strictly orthodox, believed that Mr. Tayler held the essential truths of the gospel of Christ.

Dr. James Lindsay, of Monkwell Street; Dr. Evans, of Worship Street; and Mr. Hugh Worthington, of Salter's Hall, belonged to the so-called Arian class. But I gather that they left no representatives of those opinions in the pulpits they occupied; and that when they were gone, their successors receded much farther than their predecessors from orthodox lines of belief. The fact is that Arianism in England eighty years ago, if not on the edge of a precipice, was on the top of an inclined plane, and became so indefinite that it kept little hold on ancient creeds, and could not by any means remain the basis of a distinct denomination. It provided no bond for united testimony and for corporate action. The history of ancient and modern Arianism shows that it cannot continue in one stay. It is a fluctuating quantity. It shows strength only by protests against narrow orthodoxy, the authority of mere human opinions, and the proceedings of those who uphold and enforce antique standards of Divinity. On the positive side, it is

weak as water, having nothing in it to resist the pressure of antagonistic criticism. Hence it gradually succumbed. What light it had was slowly extinguished.

The second name, that of Socinian, applied to Presbyterians, is misleading. As so-called Arians in modern times are not to be judged by a strict application of the letter written by Arius, as we have it in the History by Theodoret,[1] or of the creed published at Ariminum; neither are modern Socinians, so styled, to be judged by studying the history of the Socini in the sixteenth century. The opinions of the uncle, Lælius Socinus, have never been published, and can be ascertained with confidence only in reference to negations. He rejected the doctrine of the Trinity; but, that the idea of Christ being a *real*, but not a *mere* man, and that He was begotten of the Holy Ghost, was believed by Lælius, and obtained currency among modern Italians, is highly probable. The opinions of Faustus Socinus, the nephew of Lælius, are known, because we have his works to explain them. He denied the proper Deity of Christ, but he regarded Him as the Son of God in a special sense, being above the rank of angels, above the rest of the created universe. He believed that the Son of God ought to be worshipped, and distinctly says that Christ "expiates our sins as He frees us from the punishment of them."[2]

The Racovian Catechism was the standard of early

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[1] Book I. chap. vi.

[2] See *Appendix to Life of Socinus*, by Toulmin.

Socinianism abroad, but John Biddle may be taken as the earliest exponent of Socinianism in this country. He lived under the Commonwealth, and published a catechism and a confession of faith touching the Holy Trinity. He did not refuse to use the word Trinity, but explained it by saying, "it consisteth of God the Father, of the man Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, the gift of God through Christ." So far from explaining away the language of Holy Writ, he pushed the practice of literal interpretation to such an extreme, that he attributes bodily attributes to the Almighty. Consequently he objected to the terms infinite and incomprehensible, as unscriptural and inappropriate in describing the Divine Being. But though Socinian in a loose sense, and sometimes mentioned as father of modern English Socinianism, Biddle in his positive form of thought differed greatly from those who have borne the name in later days.

Whilst Dr. Price may be taken as a type of modern Arianism, Dr. Priestley may be regarded as a type of Socinianism eighty years ago. But here again we are liable to be misled. Priestley differed from Faustus Socinus, and had much lower views of our blessed Lord than the Italian Protestant. Priestley believed in the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, and rejected the doctrine of the Atonement altogether; but he professed to submit to the authority of Scripture, allowed its inspiration, and accepted its record of miracles. He had his followers, and they appeared in the early part of this century amongst the English Presbyterians; but another kind of theological opinion began at that time to show itself.

Hence Arian and Socinian were terms no longer applicable in general to the Presbyterians of the period before us. They departed, in most cases, from the theology opposed to that of Athanasius in the Nicene age; and they also dropped some marked peculiarities in the teaching of the Socini. They preferred to be called Unitarians.

Another shade of heterodoxy might be found falling over a few. Between Sabellianism—which denies the distinction of *persons* in the Godhead, and regards Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as different names given to different modes of Divine manifestation—and Unitarianism, which maintains the unity of God in opposition to a Trinity of persons, there is some resemblance. Sabellian speculations have existed among divines otherwise quite orthodox, and English Presbyterians have sometimes claimed such divines as Unitarians in common with themselves. But besides this, it is quite possible, amidst the freedom of thought on which modern Presbyterians prided themselves, there might be found thinkers who were more Sabellian than either Arian or Socinian. It was not as apostles of faith, as framers of a creed, that they venerated unorthodox speculation of earlier time, but as apostles of liberty, men who broke bounds, and threw off trammels imposed upon them by a dominant party. They did not nail their colours to Italian, Polish, or English masts, but they gloried in a liberty to mark any device they pleased on the flags they carried. They became so many units, without a bond of spiritual belief beyond that which they professed respecting the unity of God. But the

unity of God is as strenuously maintained by the orthodox as by themselves, and by Muhammadans also; therefore it cannot be a distinction properly belonging only to those who thus exclusively claim it. They deny the doctrine of the Trinity. That marks them off from others. It is a negative not a positive distinction.

Priestley did much by his scientific reputation and theological writings to impart momentum to the new movement, and that movement soon progressed at a rate from which he would have recoiled.

There were erratic individuals who cannot be fairly taken as typical men. Gilbert Wakefield, who died as the century opened, and had passed from an English curacy to a tutorship at the Warrington and Hackney academies, and distinguished himself by political opinions which brought him to Dorchester jail for a seditious libel, became a bitter opponent of the Established Church, and even questioned the expediency and propriety of social worship altogether "He was as violent against Greek accents as he was against the Trinity, and anathematized the final *v* as strongly as episcopacy."

Theophilus Lindsey and Thomas Belsham were men of a very different stamp: one was patriarch of the Presbyterian party down to 1808, the other twenty-one years longer was its efficient advocate. Lindsey was a man of great integrity, of pure mind, and of virtuous life. He had been educated at Cambridge, and was incumbent of Catterick, in the county of York; but not believing in the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, he felt compelled to become a Non-

conformist. This he did, although his prospects were brilliant, for he enjoyed the patronage of the Huntingdon and Northumberland families, nor could "the tears of a people to whom he was justly endeared, tempt him to violate the dictates of conscience." He went to London, without the means of subsistence; but encouraged there by sympathetic supporters, he opened a chapel in Essex Street, where he taught Unitarian principles, and adopted a form of liturgical worship, framed on a model prepared by Dr. Samuel Clarke.[1]

By degrees a congregation of advanced thinkers gathered round the pulpit at Essex Street. It has always been remarkable for intelligence, and has also numbered several people of wealth and rank amongst its members. Mr. Lindsey's secession from the Church of England gave him a wide notoriety, and the opinions of such a man naturally excited a good deal of criticism. It is curious that one who diverged so far from orthodoxy should have been the means of converting David Simpson, a Macclesfield clergyman, author of *A Plea for Religion*, yet such really was the case; and it came about entirely through an earnest recommendation of Scripture study, which the young minister had before neglected. Though Lindsey became a Nonconformist, he had little to do with other Dissenters, because "few of them were capable of appreciating his worth," so it has been affirmed; but the obvious cause of alienation is found in his sentiments being incompatible with

[1] *Religion under Queen Anne and the Georges*, vol. ii. p. 111.

those held by the majority of his brethren. They, however, esteemed him highly for his conscientiousness; and Job Orton warmly eulogized him on that account, in his *Letters to Dissenting Ministers.*[1]

In spite of political union between the three denominations, Lindsey and his associates were regarded by Independents and Baptists as being in a state of very serious error; and towards the close of the period before us, the harmony of the three Boards was interrupted by this circumstance. Before proceeding to notice Mr. Belsham, who next to Mr. Lindsey ranks as father of modern Unitarianism, notice ought to be taken of an intermediate person, who could not vie with Lindsey in influence over those who departed from the orthodox creed, and who yet in the country, and in his own neighbourhood, occupied a prominent post: I refer to Dr. Toulmin. He had suffered much on account of his opinions at the time of the Birmingham riots. The bitter spirit prevalent in that Midland town extended to Taunton, in Somersetshire, where Toulmin was pastor over a general Baptist congregation, which had adopted Unitarian tenets. He had to leave a place where, though he had many enemies, he had also many friends; and in 1804 we find him settling at Birmingham as pastor of the New Meeting congregation, at a time when Dr. Priestley was finishing his course in the State of Pennsylvania. Whether Toulmin was as pronounced a Unitarian as Lindsey, I am unable to say; but I find him telling a friend in the year

[1] Orton's *Letters to Dissenting Ministers*, vol. ii. p. 153.

1809, "You will perceive I am still the Baptist. Human nature, it appears to me, requires ritual services. The promulgation of religious truth requires it, the preserving the memory and awakening attention to important facts require it." About the same period he laments that the Birmingham Dissenters and Whigs were in a minority. "They fear the influence of the clergy," he says; and adds, "The men who take the lead are Tories of the old school or of the Evangelical class."[1] It is pleasant to find that, in the prospect of death, he expressed a wish that "his pall should be supported by six ministers of different denominations. Among those who acceded to this desire were the Rev. John Kennedy, of the Church of England, and the Rev. J. A. James, an eminent Dissenting minister."[2] Toulmin died in 1815.

Whatever hesitation one may feel respecting a statement of his opinions, no difficulty exists with regard to those of Thomas Belsham. After being educated amongst Independents, he seceded from their communion before the end of the eighteenth century. He became tutor in the New Academy, Hackney; succeeded Dr. Priestley at the Gravel Pit Meeting-house there; and next removed to Essex Street, as pastor, in the room of Dr. Disney, who had immediately followed Mr. Lindsey. No man could be more outspoken than Mr. Belsham—no man could be more honest in the expression of his convictions.

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[1] *Memoirs of Aspland*, pp. 237, 238.

[2] Murch's *Presbyterian Churches*, p. 205.

He may be regarded as the founder of "the Unitarian Society," which commenced its existence in 1791. The preamble to its rules, written by this gentleman, distinctly declares, "As the object of the Society was by no means to collect a great number of subscribers, but chiefly to form an Association of those who thought it right to lay aside all ambiguity of language, and to make a solemn public profession of their belief in the proper unity of God, and of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, in opposition both to the Trinitarian doctrine of three Persons in the Deity, and to the Arian hypothesis of a created Maker, Preserver, and Governor of the world, it was judged expedient to express this article in the preamble in the most explicit manner." Hitherto men of different opinions as to the nature of our Lord had united on the common ground of anti-Trinitarianism—some of them, not so much because they thought it most prudent, but because they did not wish to restrict Church fellowship within dogmatic circles; but now with a candour, the result of which was indeed foreseen, Unitarians declared themselves in a way which cut them off from the Arian brotherhood. Some of them seem to have shrunk from so advanced a step. The course actually pursued put the old Arian and the new Unitarians "in a position of mutual hostility." They were no longer one body. The elder brethren would make no confession of faith, and they neglected all attempts at organization. Mr. Belsham therefore stood master of his own field; and he cheered forward to independent action those who sympathised in his doctrinal views. Indeed, it

is not improbable that there might be those who, inspirited by his daring, and wishing not to be left outside a visible communion, joined the movement without going the length of the new manifesto. The old spirit, if not exactly the old watchwords, had been freedom of thought, liberty for each to think for himself, no dogmatic creeds, no restraint on religious inquiry; but now came the renunciation of what many had once counted their glory; and believers in the simple humanity of Jesus formed themselves into a new sect, at war with other parties in Christendom, for they inscribed a negative as well as an affirmative motto on their shield. It was an era in the history of those who rejected the common faith. It marked a new beginning in the annals of anti-Trinitarianism. It was immediately followed by other steps along the same line. An express periodical was felt to be necessary for the propagation of Unitarian views, and a previous work having this tendency became merged in the *Inquirer*.

The Unitarian Fund, originating in the year 1806, supplied sinews for the Unitarian Society, and the promotion of objects it had in view. A small party met and resolved, "That it is desirable to establish a fund for the promotion of Unitarianism by encouraging popular preaching;" and further, that "by Unitarianism was intended a system which is included in the belief and worship of one only God, the Creator and Governor of the world, in contradistinction to doctrines commonly called orthodox." This was an emphasizing of what had been said just before, and a throwing down of the gauntlet in the face of orthodox

denominations. Belsham did not join the movement at first, inasmuch as the employment of uneducated men was contemplated by the leaders—a departure from old Presbyterian traditions in favour of only a learned ministry. A sentence shows what this gentleman afterwards thought of the prospectus of this new fund: "It is to be regretted that the Society is regarded by some of our Unitarian brethren with a dubious sort of feeling, bordering upon suspicion and dislike. They think we shall degrade the Unitarian cause, and put ourselves on a level with the Methodists. Their fears originate in their love of truth, and ought to be respected. But let us ask in what particulars we are likely to become what is feared. The Methodists are praiseworthy for their zeal, their zeal as displayed in the fervour of their devotion, and their activity in popular preaching." "The question resolves into two or three principal inquiries. In the first place, Is the Unitarian doctrine the doctrine of the gospel? Is the gospel intended for the poor, or can it be understood by them? Is it the duty of Christians to propagate the gospel, and if it is, is it not right to propagate it by the methods taken by our Lord and His apostles, and which have always succeeded?" Much of significance comes to light in these inquiries. Those who put them had become tired of the formality and supineness of the eighteenth century, and, in an age of revival, even in the act repudiating Evangelical doctrines, they panted for the life with which those doctrines were commonly associated. Belsham for a time held aloof; but in 1812 he said, "Some do yet approve it, and others who wish well

to the design do not regard it as within the field of their personal exertions. But after the success which has attended the efforts of this Society, no person who is a real friend to the cause can consistently be hostile to its principle." Lukewarmness has sometimes been made a reproach of the Unitarian body, but in this new form of it we witness a manifestation of zeal; and, I suppose, Robert Hall had it in view when he made it one topic of his sermon "On the spirit and tendency of Socinianism." "Their rage for proselytism is difficult to be accounted for on their principles." [1]

Another step followed in 1811. The "Unitarian Academy" was formed, differing from the Educational Institute already existing in the city of York, and intended to take the place of one at Hackney, which had been superintended for a while by Mr. Belsham. The spirit of the times, said this gentleman in highly rhetorical terms, was against it. "It fell, and the birds of night, ignorance, and envy, bigotry and rancour screamed their ungenerous triumph over the ruins of this stately edifice; while virtue, truth, and learning mourned in secret over the disappointment of their fond hopes, and of their too highly elevated expectations." [2] The new "Unitarian Academy," fostered by the author of this excited exclamation, had but a brief existence, and disappeared in the year 1818, though it had the advantage of being conducted by Mr. Aspland.

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[1] Hall's *Works*, vol. v. p. 46.

[2] Quoted in *Memoirs of Aspland*, p. 305.

Mr. Belsham made contributions to Unitarian literature in several works, and he is believed to have had a considerable share in preparing "The Improved Version of the New Testament." From what I have said respecting his opinions, the dogmatic cast of his writings in reference to the person of the Saviour may be correctly inferred. They deny His Divinity in the sense which orthodox believers attach to that term; and with anti-Trinitarianism we find anti-Calvinism coupled in a very unmistakable manner. Misapprehension on the part of opponents has often been the fate of those who have been assailed as holding the distinctive sentiments of the Genevan Reformer. Over and over again may be found attributed to his nominal followers that which they decidedly repudiate. Caricature plays a conspicuous part in most polemical fields, but in this probably it is more active and ingenious than in any other. Belsham had been brought up amongst Calvinists, but he seems either to have misunderstood or forgotten the lessons of his youth; for neither Dr. Ashworth, his tutor, nor Dr. Doddridge, that tutor's preceptor, would have recognised their own theology under the strange colouring given by this pupil to principles they upheld respecting Divine sovereignty. There are Calvinists and Calvinists, so there are Unitarians and Unitarians; and it is as unjust to confound together all classes of the first, as it would be to confound all classes of the second. The representations given by Belsham certainly do not apply to all, or even to most Evangelical believers in the doctrine of Divine preordination.

It is strange to find that this author, notwithstanding

his anti-evangelical antipathies, maintained the philosophical doctrine of necessity—a doctrine which has sometimes served as foundation or buttress for the highest predestinarianism. He goes still further in the same direction, when he asserts that "God is, strictly speaking, the author of evil," though He never ordains or permits it "but with a view to the production of a greater good." This author adds, however, that God is not the approver of evil; that He "does not delight in it for its own sake;" that it must be "the object of His aversion, and what He would never permit or endure if the good He intends could have been accomplished without it."[1] It would be strange if such a writer did not further acknowledge God as also the author of good; and indeed, he does so, distinctly, when he says we are "thankfully to ascribe all our improvements, our hopes, and our consolations to God;" and, implicitly, when he affirms that to His appointment and continued agency all causes owe their efficacy. But into this very conviction, shared by St. Paul, that "of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever," genuine Calvinism strikes one of its very strongest roots.[2] It is obvious, though not superfluous, to remark, that if authors would endeavour to look at subjects from the point of view adopted by those they criticise, and to ascertain exactly what they mean, much impertinent and

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[1] Belsham's *Memoirs of Lindsey*. See Robert Hall's review of this book, *Works*, vol. iv. p. 212.

[2] *Review of Wilberforce's Treatise*, p. 175.

useless reasoning would be avoided, and much charity and good-will would result.

As might be surmised, several authors came forward to answer this controversialist. The two most distinguished were Archbishop Magee and Dr. Pye Smith, tutor of Homerton Academy. The former, both learned and able, had some hard hitting at his antagonist, and occasionally adopted a cutting style; but his treatment was by no means so supercilious and disrespectful as that which Priestley received at Horsley's hands. Dr. Pye Smith, on the other hand, appears eminently courteous and candid, and was ever ready to recognise social virtues and other good qualities possessed by his neighbour. He righteously condemned "harsh and irritating language, crying down rather than answering opponents," and aptly quoted Dr. Owen's words in reference to dealing with what we esteem fatal error. "Is it humanity to stand on the shore, and seeing men in a storm at sea, wherein they are ready every moment to be cast away and perish, to storm at them ourselves, or to shoot them to death, or to cast fire into their vessel, because they are in danger of being drowned?"[1]

Robert Aspland, long before Belsham's death, in 1829, took a leading position amongst Unitarians, as the result of his eminent ability and exhaustless zeal. Not that he came forward as a great doctrinal controversialist, or as the author of any important work,

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[1] Owen on *Spiritual Understanding*, chap. v., quoted in Smith's *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, second edition, vol. i. p. 5.

though he was prolific in producing sermons and tracts; his chosen labour was rather in the direction of organizing Unitarian interests. Indeed, he, more than any man, more than even Mr. Belsham, contributed to form what has since been known as the Unitarian body in this country. After having been educated as a Baptist at the Bristol Academy, he gave up the faith of his childhood, accepted an invitation to become morning preacher at the Gravel Pit Meeting-house, and undertook an afternoon preachership there as well,—Belsham having resigned the pastorate, and entered upon his work as successor to Theophilus Lindsey at Essex Street. Mr. Aspland, it would appear, went further than his predecessor in some of his ecclesiastical views. The Unitarian Society had been born before he went to Hackney, but in the origination of the Unitarian Fund, in 1806, he took a vigorous part as the first secretary; and about the same time he inaugurated at the Gravel Pits what he called "Conferences," for the discussion of Unitarian and other questions. Again, in 1811 he came to the front as chief founder and sole tutor of the new Unitarian Academy; in 1819 he arrests attention as leader in framing the Association for protecting Unitarian civil rights. This, as well as the "Unitarian Fund Society," afterwards merged in a more comprehensive organization, bearing the name of "the British and Foreign Unitarian Association." Mr. Aspland was secretary of this Institute. The part he took in the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and his famous speech at the commemorative banquet, have been noticed already. Throughout his

public life he continued an unswerving advocate of civil and religious liberty, and not less so of European peace against a strong war party at that period in the ascendant. It is pleasant to follow this controversialist into the privacy of social life, where, as the filial author of his Memoir informs us, he saw "three divines of most venerable and attractive appearance, in the clerical costume of the last century, one of whom was Mr. Palmer; who, in a manner combining dignity, kindness, and pleasantry, gave him, 'the son of Robert Aspland,' his blessing, and wished him to be like his father in everything *except his heresy*." Mr. Aspland survived till 1845.

English Presbyterianism, in other parts of the country, passed through a change resembling what took place in London. Arian in the middle, it became Unitarian by the end of the last century. The principal congregations were in Liverpool, Manchester, York, Birmingham, Norwich, and Bristol. The western counties included meeting houses of the general Baptist class, which, like others of Presbyterian origin, had become Unitarian, and they presented several examples of decline, and also a few of revival between 1800 and 1835; at Trowbridge, where the practice was to fill up the pastorate, when vacant, by the election of one of the members, pastors not being necessarily separated from secular occupations; at Bradford, where Unitarian forms of prayer, as in some other West of England instances, were used; and at Wareham, where the use of an old chapel was recovered by the orthodox party,—decay was plainly apparent. In Bristol, a leading member

of the Lewin's Mead congregation went over to the Calvinistic Baptists in 1817, and in 1822 a clergyman of the Establishment avowed in the same place his conversion to Unitarian sentiments. Dr. Carpenter was a highly respected minister in Bristol for some years. In Bath, the well-known antiquary, Joseph Hunter—whose services afterwards in connection with the public records were so valuable—officiated as a Unitarian preacher from 1809 to 1833. At Bradford, in Wiltshire, the Grove Meeting, which had been closed, was re-opened for anti-Trinitarian worship in 1822. At Bridport, where dissent flourished, and was a power in the corporation, the old Presbyterian body manifested considerable vigour. In 1825 a missionary association for Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire was formed, and a "new interest" originated in Cheltenham in 1832. But a remarkable instance is found in "the Western Unitarian Society," which commenced in 1792, and in 1812 only numbered 217 members. After speaking of Christ as "a wise man," and referring to the worship of Him as "idolatrous," the Society about the year 1830 dropped in its preamble these expressions, and received amongst its members certain Arians who had previously objected to unite with them on account of antagonistic language which had been employed. These are the only statistics I can collect; but on turning to quotations from the *Monthly Repository*, I find that it is there with great candour stated, as a general fact, about 1830, "Our chapels are but thinly attended, and our interest but slow in progress. Perhaps if we advert to the increase of population in these king-

doms, we must not speak of progress, but of retrogradation." "There is a large middle class which support a healthy appearance; but many of the old chapels amongst us are in a pitiable state. Of our own knowledge we can speak of some scores which scarcely show signs of life."

A tone of religious feeling, different from the dry heterodoxy of Dr. Priestley, made its appearance at the close of the last century, and was fostered by the essays and hymns of Mrs. Barbauld. It developed visibly, but gradually, in after years, producing pious sentiments such as belong to what is called natural religion; and, though diverging more and more from the historical Christianity of Priestley, it revered the character of Jesus Christ as a moral revelation of God to man, and dwelt with affection upon His perfect example, as exhibited in the gospels. The circulation of the writings of Dr. Channing in this country did much to promote Unitarianism in a new form, combining spiritual veneration with theological rationalism.

The reputation of English Presbyterians for culture and literary achievement was sustained, and indeed augmented, during the first thirty years of the present century. A goodly roll of authors belongs to the denomination, and, at the same time, several of them were centres of domestic and social influence decidedly noteworthy. Amongst these Mrs. Barbauld occupies a foremost place. Daughter of Dr. Aiken, of Warrington, she married a Frenchman, who became minister of a Unitarian meeting-house at Hampstead, and brought upon his gifted and excellent wife no little

trouble and sorrow. Her essays, poems, and hymns have an honoured place in English literature, appreciated by numbers beyond Nonconformist circles; and her relative, Lucy Aiken, contributed, though in a less degree, something towards the fame of the family. On the northern heights of London there were several celebrities more or less connected with the Unitarian congregation. Joanna Baillie is noticed by Mrs. Barbauld as "a young lady of Hampstead, whom I visited, and who came to Mr. Barbauld's chapel all the while, with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line." Joyce, author of the well-known *Dialogues*, was successor to Barbauld at a later period; and before he came to the neighbourhood, his wife then residing with him in Suffolk, kept a school for little boys, amongst whom were Thomas Denman, destined to be Lord Chief Justice of England, also William Gell, the future antiquary of Greece and Italy. She gathered round her a large company of friends remarkable for taste, education, and genius, who loved and honoured her in her old age. Amongst them was Crabb Robinson, another Unitarian. He was a wanderer, free of intellectual society wherever he went, treasuring up reminiscences of remarkable people, much to the entertainment of his readers. John Towil Rutt, careful editor of Burton's Diary and Calamy's Life, into whose family Justice Talfourd married, was member of Mr. Aspland's congregation at Hackney. Norwich carried the literary associations of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth. The Taylors, the Martineaus, the Starks, the Aldersons, worshippers

at the Octagon Chapel, where for some years Mr. Madge officiated as minister, were leaders in literary society when I was a boy. Mrs. Opie attended as a girl; and Dr. Sayers, of Norfolk, once belonged to the congregation. The Hills flourished at Birmingham, and supported the Presbyterian meeting-house, whence came Sir Rowland, the great post-office reformer. William Roscoe, of Liverpool, biographer of Lorenzo the Magnificent, whom in a small degree he resembled as a cultivator of renaissance taste, was of the same denomination; and at Bristol might be found cultured people listening to Dr. Lant Carpenter. Coleridge at one time must have had some sort of connection with Unitarianism, for he once preached in the old Presbyterian meeting-house at Shrewsbury.

We must not forget, before ending this chapter, that though English Presbyterianism glided into a heterodox position all over the south and middle of England, there were some ancient congregations in the north who adhered to the puritan faith of their fathers. Those in Northumberland, alarmed at the progress of Arian and Unitarian opinions, made provision, in their title deeds, that no one was eligible for the pastorate unless he declared his belief in the Westminster Confession.[1] In several of these congregations a constant succession of orthodox and Evangelical ministers has been kept up during the last century, and down to the present day.[2]

There were in England several other Scotch

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[1] MacCrie's *Annals of English Presbyterianism*, p. 318.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 319.

Presbyterian churches, maintaining the faith professed in their old standards. Dr. Young, the historian, of Whitby, presided over a respectable congregation in that picturesque and ancient coast town. Dr. Alexander Waugh, more widely known and more popular as a preacher, carried on a successful ministry in Wells Street, London. He had been educated in one of the Universities of his own country, and gathered round him, as a Scotch Presbyterian pastor, a large number of influential fellow-countrymen. Tall, portly, of commanding presence, with a fine face, pleasant countenance, piercing eyes, he was a well-known and admired figure in Metropolitan gatherings beyond the borders of his own denomination. He threw himself energetically into the support of the London Missionary Society, of which he was long an active director. There must have been a singular charm in the minister and the man. His fine voice and strong Scotch accent gave force to sermons rich in sentiment and illustration ; his intensely Evangelical teaching, and his gift in prayer, the solemnity and ardour with which he addressed the Almighty, were long remembered after his death, and traditions respecting them still linger amongst the children of his people. In private life he won all hearts, and must have been a genial companion, full of love and sympathy. One very dear to me, though not related to him, would often speak of him with all the affection of a daughter. Dr. Hunter, at an earlier period, occupied the pulpit of the Scotch Church, London Wall, and died in 1802. His fame as a preacher was very great, and the popularity of his

writings was very wide. Belonging to the Established Church of Scotland, he officiated as chaplain to the Scotch Corporation; and he zealously supported, as secretary, the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in the highlands and islands of his native country. As a pulpit orator, we are told his manner was solemn, unaffected, and impressive. His prayers —so prominent a part of Scottish worship—were peculiarly striking; a lively fancy, quick sensibility, and unassuming manner diffused a peculiar charm over his conversation, and rendered his company extremely desirable. His *Sacred Biography*, in seven volumes, is the pillar of his literary fame. Their spirited style made an impression at the time, when characters in the Bible were generally painted in dull and indistinct colours.

CHAPTER IX.

INDEPENDENTS.

1800–1830.

THE second division in the three denominations was commonly called the Independent. If, at the commencement of the present century, Presbyterianism was assuming an attitude of freethought, a majority of those who adopted Independency had a good deal of conservatism, both doctrinal and ecclesiastical. They held to the traditions of their fathers, steadily adhering to old Puritan lines. They were jealous of ideas which trenched on the theology of the *Assembly's Catechism*, or upon the ecclesiasticism of "the Five Brethren" at Westminster. They were many of them lynx-eyed in detecting innovations on orthodox principles, and were alarmed at schemes for denominational union, seeing as they did in everything of that sort, a Trojan horse full of mischief. Another fact must be remembered. Whilst freethought in doctrine obtained amongst modern English Presbyterians, several amongst them were conspicuous in advocating Liberal political principles, in this respect following in the wake of Price and Priestley. But Independents, though opposed to Tory High Churchmen, did not resemble, except

in a few cases, their Presbyterian brethren as to political action. At the close of the last century and early in the present one, some of the former reflected on their Presbyterian contemporaries for pursuing political objects more earnestly than they did religious ones. Independents were not then, as afterwards, conspicuous in the assertion of popular rights. An element of political conservatism in my early days lingered in Congregational churches. They contained for the most part old-fashioned Whigs, and could not count on many advanced Liberals. Firmly attached to Independency, they made themselves chiefly known by earnestness in preaching the gospel; and for this purpose they associated much with Calvinistic Methodists, and often occupied the pulpit at Matthew Wilks' tabernacle and at Rowland Hill's chapel. A typical instance of this class was William Bull, the friend of Cowper and John Newton, who resided at Newport Pagnell, where he presided over a church founded by an ejected minister, and at the same time superintended an academy largely supported by the city merchant John Thornton. He combined with sociable qualities a singular kind of pulpit eloquence, dashed with a little eccentricity, which made him pre-eminently popular with congregations in London. He lived down to the year 1814, and when he came to town and delighted the hearts of old people who could remember George Whitefield, they extolled his teaching, and wished he might live yet many and many a year. Portraits and traditions of him remain in the pleasant country town where he fulfilled a

long pastorate, and he comes before us a fine, tall old man, with full-bottomed wig, dressed very much like a bishop.

In connection with a fervent love for Evangelical doctrines, ecclesiastical conservatism, in many instances, developed itself in strong attachment to the following principles,—that a complete power of government and action exists in every Congregational church; and that the pastor, the deacons, and the private members make up a corporate ecclesiastical body, not only *capable* of entirely managing its own affairs, but *bound* to watch against whatever might imperil its integrity. This policy was not maintained on grounds of expediency, it was not based chiefly on a principle of freedom; but a *jus divinum*, a Divine right was claimed for this constitution of social spiritual life. No admission was made to the effect that the New Testament leaves Church polity an open question; on the contrary, the contention was that Christ and His apostles laid down principles and supplied precedents from which may be satisfactorily drawn an outline of discipline and worship. No bishop could be more decided in maintaining the Divine origin of Episcopacy; no Presbyterian of Commonwealth times could be more sure of the Divine origin of ruling synods, than were these Nonconformist fathers in reference to the Divine origin of their Independency. Faith in it was firm as a rock. Floating theories, now current, would have been to them no better than jelly fish. Their convictions were tough gristle and hard bone: they knew what they meant, and unmistakably expressed it.

With a firm belief that Independency is Divine, they were jealous alike of Arminian innovations and of Presbyterian encroachments. The principle of self-government was an ark not to be touched with unholy hands. It had divinely fashioned staves, and these with pride the veterans reverently bore upon their shoulders. They saw mischief where other people could not, and were afraid lest through ministers' conferences evils attendant upon Church councils might be incurred. Councils from Nicæa downwards were to them an abomination. Convocations seemed no better. If anybody told them they carried their apprehensions too far, they shook their heads, saying important principles were at stake, and any deviation from them would be the letting in of water.[1] They believed that the organization of Church work on any wide and elaborate scale might generate unanticipated mischief. Machinery outside churches was suspected of being usable for purposes which less sagacious people did not apprehend. Money power was feared as likely to be turned into an engine of despotism. All this exhibited a phase of ecclesiastical life different from that of contemporary Presbyterianism; for the first of the three denominations, whilst really Independent in fact, did not insist much, if at all, upon Scripture precedent, but rested liberty of action on grounds of expediency.

Changes, however, were at hand, not so much in

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[1] Here, and in other parts of this chapter, I have availed myself of a paper I read at the Jubilee Meeting in Manchester 1881.

principle as in spirit. The old historic name of Independent began to be merged in that of Congregationalist. This is certainly a significant circumstance.

All ecclesiastical systems are in danger of being pushed to extremes, and are exposed to their own particular temptations—their own easily besetting sins. Individuality is liable to be merged, if not crushed, in national Churches, but especially in the so-called Catholic Church of Rome. The atom disappears in the mass, the unit in the multitude; an assertion of personal convictions appears impertinent, presumptuous. On the other hand, individuality is in danger of being over-developed in small communities, self-contained, and jealous of everything which seems like a yoke of bondage. Self-assertion is at the back of all protests against common opinion, all dissent from modes of collective proceeding; and when a spirit of individuality lays strong hold upon a party of honest men, very decided in the expression of honesty, the result is apt to be, not only sharp antagonism to what contradicts their principles, but also isolation and exclusiveness. This was a weakness into which old Independency sometimes fell. And seeing this, some Independents, who saw other things also, and felt there were bonds of relationship, human and Divine, amongst Churches of their own order, sought to gather those bonds into a comprehensive girdle, uniting individual communities in a recognised whole, without forfeiting internal freedom. Each Church being a congregation of individuals, and the entire denomination being a congregation of Churches,

they wished to make the fact more manifest than it had been; and therefore brought into use the congregational name, and brought out the social as well as the independent side of their Church principles.

The great Congregational movement of 1831 does not belong to the present volume; only aspirations after something of that kind come within the range of our present period. Our business now is to look round upon the leading ministers of the denomination, and to select a few instances in town and country which may fairly represent some efficient workers in the vineyard.

The Claytons—a family including a father and three sons—stood in the front rank. The father, a gentleman dignified and courtly, had come under the influence of Lady Huntingdon; and to the time of his death he remained steadily attached to doctrines dear to her ladyship. He was a Dissenter of moderate type, and had no sympathy with advanced political views; as might be expected, he cultivated friendly relations with the principal Evangelical clergy. Mr. Clayton was for many years pastor at the King's Weighhouse, Eastcheap, where an influential and, for that time of day, a numerous congregation used to assemble. Two of his sons, John and George,[1] took a leading position amongst London Independents, the one increasingly popular, first at Camomile Street after a short ministry at Kensington, and next at the Poultry, the other spending his

[1] There was a third son in the ministry, William Clayton, who did not occupy so prominent a position.

ministerial life in a long and successful pastorate at Walworth. The sons revered their father, and in some respects perpetuated his habits and style; and the sire was wont quaintly to say of them, that "one had the best stock of goods, and the other the best shop window." They were types of a class chiefly known by Evangelical ministrations, by an exemplary discharge of pastoral duties, by a zealous support of catholic institutions, by gentlemanly demeanour, the result of inheritance and education, and by a large intercourse with ministers of other denominations. Side by side with them, though more pronounced in Dissenting principles, was Dr. Winter, a descendant of Thomas Bradbury, and a distant successor in the pastorate of New Court, Lincoln's Inn. As an orthodox but not a narrow and exclusive divine, as a solid and instructive teacher, and a wise counsellor and friend, he was looked up to by other Churches; and he frequently officiated at ordinations at the opening of places of worship, and on other public occasions. He gathered round him a goodly number of hearers, amongst whom might be seen a sprinkling of aristocratic citizens.

Passing from the city, I turn to the suburbs, where Nonconformity during the first quarter of the century began to thrive as it had never done before. In Kensington a congregation arose under peculiar circumstances. A favourite coachman of George III., who used to place tracts in his master's travelling carriage, being a decidedly religious man, and a Dissenter, gathered friends together for Christian edification in a humble building. Afterwards,

assisted by the King's head-gardener, and Mr. Broadwood, the pianoforte maker, this small Society built Hornton Street Chapel. Several Scotchmen being interested in it gave a Presbyterian character to the enterprise, but it afterwards developed into a decidedly Independent form.

On the other side of London, at Peckham, Dr. Collyer was in the zenith of popularity. By a silvery tone of address, and by lectures written in a pleasant style, he attracted the notice, not only of the middle class, but of a few people of high rank, including the Duke of Kent and the Duke of Sussex, who treated him with marked kindness. William Orme occupied the pulpit of an old Congregational place of worship at Camberwell, and was remarkable for masculine eloquence. He retained habits of thought peculiar to Scotland, where he had been born and educated; but though his preaching might be disquisitional, it was never dry. He added to the duties of the pastorate the secretaryship of the London Missionary Society, and in that capacity exhibited administrative power of the highest order, not only mastering details, but guiding and inspiring men, and occasionally manifesting a spirit of independence which some people knew not how to brook. But as an author he will be best known to posterity. His Lives of Dr. Owen and Richard Baxter give him a prominent place amongst ecclesiastical biographers, and his *Bibliotheca* is known by bibliographers as a very useful compendium.

I pass from ministers to colleges. Dr. Pye Smith and the Rev. William Walford were tutors at

Homerton. The former walked pretty closely in the steps of Owen and Thomas Goodwin, and looked rather suspiciously on some views held by Baxter and Howe. Conservative in doctrine, he was in advance of his brethren in criticism and science. He occupied a front place amongst English-German students of his day, and mastered most of the commentaries of the chief scholars of the "Fatherland," with a judgment discriminating and appreciative. His eminence as a Hebrew and Greek scholar rendered him an able critic of the Old and New Testaments; and his works on *The Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, and *The Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ*, retain a high value, even when read in the light of modern scholarship. His courageous independence of judgment with relation to the canonicity of Solomon's Song exposed him to animadversions, which he bore with exemplary meekness; but his reverence for Divine revelation could not be surpassed, and his devout piety was so obvious as to be universally acknowledged. At a time when modern geology was regarded with suspicion, the temper of mind just indicated further appeared in reference to the antiquity of the earth, and the extent of the Deluge; and in meetings of the British Association he was treated as a well-informed and unprejudiced geologist. In accordance with his scientific convictions, he interpreted parts of the book of Genesis in a manner then unusual, though common enough now.

Mr. Walford was a good scholar, and in theological opinions followed, with reverent steps, the teachings

of both Butler and Edwards, whose writings he had at his fingers' ends. A foe to all which he counted enthusiasm, he preserved a devotional temper, and left behind him works on *The Method of Prayer*, *The Book of Psalms*, and *The Epistle to the Romans*. In Highbury College, Dr. William Harris was theological tutor to the time of his death, when Dr. Henderson, an eminent Hebraist, and author of commentaries on the Prophets, succeeded him in office; Dr. Burder took the philosophical department, employing Dugald Stewart's writings as favourite text-books; and Dr. Halley, who afterwards became a popular preacher at Manchester, was for some years classical teacher. At a later period, he became principal of New College, St. John's Wood. There was a third Independent academy, not in the neighbourhood just mentioned, but at Wymondley, Hertfordshire, yet managed by a small body of trustees residing in London. It was originally under the care of Dr. Doddridge, and afterwards subjected to changes and removals, but throughout supported from funds bequeathed by Mr. Coward, a London merchant of the past century. It was for nineteen years under the care of William Parry, who was succeeded by a minister named John Atkinson. The academy towards the close of this period sunk into a state of confusion from want of discipline; and for a time its reputation was shaded by unfavourable reports. Though at one period there was a leaning towards "freethought" on the part of one or two trustees, their correspondence with the tutors indicated no disposition whatever to swerve from the

trust reposed in them. I do not find, from an inspection of college documents, that either of the tutors was accused of heterodoxy, though, under the later of the two, "freethought" made its appearance among the students. The reins were dropped, and insubordination arose. But if some students adopted questionable opinions, others were ultraorthodox, and not very charitable in judging their brethren. At the commencement of 1822 a more satisfactory state of things ensued.

Leaving London for the provinces, we meet with both the old and new aspects of Independent Nonconformity. I shall illustrate this point by a reference to the city of Norwich. Down to the early part of this century, the only representation of Congregational principles was at the old meeting, where existed a Church which traced its origin to Commonwealth times. The aged pastor, wearing a full-bottomed wig, ruled his flock with rather high-handed notions; and there lingered for many years traditions of his sitting to preach, and of his impressing the audience by his venerable appearance. A second Church was formed more than sixty years ago under the ministry of John Alexander, a young man of fervent piety. If the old pastor was a type of denominational conservatism, John Alexander represented denominational progress. Like David, he had a ruddy countenance; his memory was filled with both thoughts and words, he was apt in quotation, and delivered his discourses in plaintive tones. His speech from first to last had a Nestor-like quality, falling gentle as a snowflake, without the coldness of its touch. He was a good

specimen of students educated at Hoxton by Dr. Simpson, a man remarkable for enthusiasm, who knew how to inspire as well as instruct. Another minister amongst the Hoxton students was Richard Winter Hamilton, of Leeds, a decided Calvinist, who employed a rare combination of logical and imaginative faculties in the defence and illustration of his opinions. He was as daring as Augustine, and in some respects vehement like Martin Luther, only he expressed his thoughts in a more artificial form than the latter was wont to employ. He was fond of classical allusions, had keen wit, could pun with dexterity, and a story never lost by his way of telling it. Though a sturdy Dissenter, he used to pay the High Church vicar, Dr. Hook, "a peppercorn rent of respect," by calling on him once a year. It was a small tribute, sincerely offered by the one, and genially accepted by the other. James Parsons, of York, was contemporary with Dr. Hamilton, and between them there existed a warm and constant friendship. Mr. Parsons had been educated in what was then called Idle, but is now Airedale College, near Bradford; and in the same county, at Rotherham, was another collegiate institution.[1] The trust-deed of Idle Academy provided that therein "should be taught and inculcated the doctrines contained in the Shorter Catechism, composed by the Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster," and that none holding different tenets should exercise any power or become students in the

[1] For some notice of Dr. Edward Williams, who presided over it early in the century, see *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 326.

college. In reference to the doctrines just noticed, thus enjoined as of authority, Dr. Hamilton ventured to exclaim: "From these rudiments of speculative and practical theology we have never diverged. These have been our solace and our song when persecution raged; these have been our stay and anchor in the more dangerous period of the calm. They were the watch towers by day; they kept our forefathers secure when all around them frowned, and can only keep us spiritually minded now that all around us smile; they made our dungeon sweet, and can only make our palace safe." In this kind of theology Mr. Parsons was educated, and to it he substantially adhered so long as he lived. His popularity during his visits to London was amazing. About the year 1828 congregations willingly waited for an hour beforehand to hear the tall, slim preacher open his lips. By sounds which at first scarcely rose above a whisper, he caught attention and inspired curiosity, his audience being convinced that something would presently come worth hearing; people would sit in breathless silence, panting for the end of sentences, which they caught gradually with more and more distinctness, until a pause in the shrill clear voice gave them an opportunity to relieve themselves by a slight cough or a change of posture. Then, by a fresh effort, every face would be turned towards him, and, with a hand behind the ear, many a one would drink in the inspiration of his arguments and appeals. Over and above the interest of the truths he uttered, the force of his imagination, and the felicity of his diction, there went forth from him a sort of mesmeric influence, a kind of electric

shock, which, as
as if he must g
prevent being carried away by such a storm of eloquence. The earnestness of his appeals was such as to make one think them irresistible, only that "the great refusal"—if I may use Dante's words in reference to another subject—is so common amongst men when they hear Heaven's message of mercy. His exquisite facetiousness led captive many a company, and one wondered sometimes how he could pass as he did from grave to gay; yet, looking into the depths of human nature, we see how opposite qualities are connected, how indeed one involves another. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, was almost equally agreeable and popular as a public speaker and a parlour companion. He had a fine voice, and kept it in command, so that the tones of his utterance corresponded with the sentiments of his discourse. He delighted in preaching at the opening of chapels, and on one of these occasions he said to me in the vestry, "You see the old lion can roar still." His delivery, when he had reached beyond his seventieth year, was truly surprising. He was a thorough *virtuoso*. With what zest he would spread out his autographs, his engravings, his books, and his other curiosities! With what enthusiasm he would dilate on the special preciousness of some amongst them! He loved travelling, and had considerable taste for the fine arts; but his noblest quality was found in his ministerial life, ever preaching the gospel, ever labouring to promote the salvation of souls. John Angell James, of Birmingham, was another Congregational leader of high distinction in those days.

Chapel
ecords that he preached
to two
generations of men, not with eloquence of speech only, but by a life which reflected with constantly increasing lustre the image of his Lord. The "harmony between him and his flock was never once troubled during his long pastorate." By his practical writings, which were translated into many languages, he made deep religious impressions on multitudes at home and abroad. Good men of all denominations loved him, for he loved the universal Church far better than any section of it.

Turning from Birmingham to Bath, it may be observed that no Dissenters, and few Churchmen, went to the latter place without going to Argyle Chapel, where William Jay preached; Wilberforce and Hannah More were his occasional hearers, and his affectionate friends. He made an impression rarely equalled. His style innovated on old habits; instead of metaphysical disquisition and laboured proofs, he, like his Master, taught the people in parables, and adopted a quaint mode of expression, which, without offending the taste, went home to the heart. His voice was organ-like, rich in power and pathos; and he not only won the praise of Wilberforce, but also excited the admiration of Sheridan and Rammohun Roy. I must not pass by the city of Bristol. It was remarkably favoured during many of the years covered by our narrative with the ministry of men ranking high in the annals of Dissent. William Thorpe, the opponent of Roman Catholic emancipation, was there; so was Robert Hall for a while, attracting to the

meeting-house at Broadmead people from all parts by his wonderful sermons. John Foster also was a Bristol resident, and delivered lectures in the city such as, for originality of thought, resembled his Essays; and in 1824 John Leifchild removed from Kensington to become pastor of the Church assembling in Bridge Street.

Besides men who filled principal posts were others, known and honoured in their own localities, but not much talked of by the outside world. On the banks of the Thames, where it flows round the castle cliff of Windsor, and past the thriving country town of Maidenhead, and hard by the pleasant village of Woburn, were three ministers, bound together by friendship, who in their time were exemplary in pastoral relations, and have left behind them memories kindly cherished by the descendants of those who enjoyed their intimacy. The first [1] was mild and gentle, a patient labourer in the Master's service, and winning the good opinions of his neighbours in the royal town; the second [2] was bold and determined, rebuking the wrong-doer, at times with untempered severity; the third [3] was genial and consistent, gathering round him a goodly congregation of folks, busy in farms and paper mills. In the county of Suffolk, in the borough of Sudbury, lived one [4] who through a long life united with the character of a country gentleman who could handle a gun, that of a pastor diligent in duties and beloved of his flock. And, in

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[1] Alexander Redford.
[2] John Cook.
[3] Joshua Harrison.
[4] John Mead Ray.

the rising sea resort of Brighton, where Dissent had to contend with many difficulties, there laboured a man [1] more widely known, who, with abundance of public spirit, was a zealous supporter of hospitals and other benevolent institutions; whilst, on the remote coast of Cornwall, at Falmouth, with its Italian-like bay, another of the brethren [2] not only attended to the interests of his own Church and the wants of the town, but looked upon the whole county as his diocese, and in return was looked up to by his own denomination as a revered *episcopos*, an apostolic overseer. These men differed in their gifts and aptitudes, they were specimens of characteristic varieties, such as exist in the wide regions of spiritual life, they were none of them possessed of great intellectual power, or of much eloquence, or of what might be truly called theological scholarship; but they were intelligent, pious, and active, combining catholic charity with distinctive ecclesiastical principles, and zealous in promoting general education, foreign missions, and Bible circulation—objects not so popular then amongst religious people as they are at the present day.

Of course, in selecting instances of ministerial efficiency, I do not forget that there were men of a different order; some with very small gifts, some manifesting little devotedness, and some chargeable with marked inconsistencies. A few cases of scandal occurred; but they were only a few, and dismissals

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[1] John Nelson Goulty.
[2] Mr. Wildbore.

from posts unworthily occupied followed speedily, almost always.

After what has been said of the ministry, it is desirable to look at the *Church* and the *social home life* of Independents in general. They had their county associations, which in their action went further than the London Congregational Board; for whilst the metropolitan union was confined to ministers, the provincial unions included the laity as well. They were associations of Churches; and without destroying the independency of each community, without interfering at all with its internal liberties, they brought together the representatives of one or two united counties into a fellowship which afforded advice, encouragement, and co-operation. The members elected a committee and a secretary, who conducted business; and the annual meetings were often occasions of spiritual excitement. They were to Dissenters what visitations are to the Church of England. Lancashire and Gloucestershire stood in this respect high amongst other counties.

Divine worship was held, at the opening of the century, in most places morning and afternoon, evening sermons being distinctive of Methodism; so that gathering shadows and dimly burning candles in weeks near Christmas gave to the sanctuary a sombre and dull appearance. There was no desire for short discourses. The longer the better; if the preacher had not the gift of brevity, the congregation had the grace of patience. Prayers were almost as long as sermons, and psalmody was far from reaching the artistic pitch it has since attained. No organ

helped the voice, and the voice was little trained to keep time or tune. But the people, after listening to an acceptable preacher, went home contented and happy. The Lord's Supper occurred once a month, and was conducted in the same manner as it had been aforetime.[1] In very few instances did the buildings make any architectural pretensions, being generally uninviting without and inconvenient within. In towns, pews were more comfortable than in villages; in the latter case there were many plain benches; and in some counties men and women sat in opposite galleries, the men in smock-frocks, the women in scarlet cloaks. In Essex and Suffolk there were many well-to-do farmers who used to drive some distance to chapel; and it was customary to provide arrangements for horses and gigs during service hours. Chapel openings and ordinations were high festivals. "Feasts of the Dedication" gathered people from all the country round, and consecrations of candidates for the ministry were popular. There was prayer and the laying on of hands, accompanied by three discourses—the first introductory, expounding denominational principles, the second addressed to the minister, and the third to the people, unfolding duties which arose out of their ecclesiastical relationship.

Sunday schools became more and more common as the century advanced; but places in which they were held were extremely inconvenient. Teachers were sometimes unintelligent, and discipline was imperfect; but there was a "spirit within the

[1] See *Religion in England*, vol. v. p. 449.

wheels." Nor did another kind of work fail of success—*itinerating* it was called; not in the Methodistical sense, but in this way. Zealous laymen would visit surrounding villages, and if they had not courage to deliver an address, they would read one of Burder's village discourses, and thus the strength of a central Church was increased by making converts, and by an ingathering of them into one united fellowship. People were not encouraged to form Churches, and to "call" a pastor where they had no means of supporting him. They acknowledged no divine right of ministerial starvation.

The home life of the period has left behind some beautiful memories. Perhaps "distance lends enchantment to the view;" but there must have been pleasant facts to inspire pleasant memories. Families were pervaded by a habit and disposition best defined by the word "*unworldliness*": no expensive banquets, where large expenditure would have been easy; no late hours, where excuses for them might have been pleaded; no questionable amusements, where youthful gaiety might have longed for such gratification. If Congregational society, in point of intellectual refinement, did not reach the highest standard of Presbyterianism, yet frequent reunions were held, especially book meetings, in Norwich for instance, where a Fellow of the Royal Society, an acute metaphysician, a profound theological layman, and a critic of no mean order, might be met with in a snug parlour on a winter's evening, holding conversations which would have done no discredit to the best clubs in London.

The condition of the poor in the cities and villages of England was in those days deplorable, and the ignorant and lawless engaged in riots, especially in the agricultural districts. The price of bread drove the indigent into a state of desperation, and bread riots occurred in Norwich when I was a boy. Multitudes assembled together and paraded the streets, to the terror of peaceful citizens ; they marched to the new mills, on the river which cuts the provincial capital in twain, forced their way into the huge, ugly building, and seizing on sacks of corn and flour, flung them down into flushing waters below the bridge. Political excitement blended with economical dissatisfaction, and in the north of England resistance to the Six Acts led to the horrors of the Peterloo massacre in 1819. The next year witnessed further disturbance, which penetrated into religious circles, and members of Independent Churches were caught within the eddies of the tempestuous whirlpool. "You have heard," says an old minister, writing to his son, "of the great and long-continued privations endured by very many in Lancashire, especially the weavers, and my people generally are of this description. Radical pamphlets have been circulated through the town, and the spouters came themselves, harangued the people, and so inflamed their minds that thousands were ripe for revolt and plunder. I am sorry that many of our good people have been caught in their traps, and have imbibed and manifested a spirit very opposite to that of the gospel they profess."

Just before the Lancashire outbreak, in view of the troubled state of the country, as well as spiritual des-

titution in agricultural districts, a Home Missionary Society was formed in London in the year 1819. About a score of zealous men met together to contrive some mode of benefiting their fellow-countrymen at this era of peril and fear, and, after much discussion, they determined to send out agents into benighted corners. They published a popular magazine in order to interest the common people, and, as the activity of their emissaries occasioned persecution, they had to seek the shelter of the law.

At a still earlier period, a few persons of different denominations clustered round an Evangelical movement on behalf of the Sister Isle ; and in 1814 the Irish Evangelical Society was instituted. An Independent minister named Loader was appointed tutor of the Dublin Institute for training Irishmen to preach. His health failed after a short service, when he was succeeded by Dr. Cope. Though fettered by want of funds, and other circumstances, this Society sent forth several efficient labourers ; and after a temporary suspension of effort, the work revived in 1832, under the influence of William Haweis Cooper and Dr. Urwick, two eminent Independent ministers in the Irish capital.

Foreign missions were zealously supported by the Independents, in connection with the London Missionary Society.[1] Some fields of labour and some distinguished men stand out beyond others, and to such I must restrict my account. China and Morri-

[1] The origin of this Society I have described in the *History of Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 405.

son, Polynesia and Williams, are the only ones that it is possible to notice.

Morrison conferred benefits upon Eastern literature beyond those immediately connected with our holy religion. As the Chinese are a literary people, and as Morrison was a literary enthusiast, it was hoped he might do something for the "Celestial Empire," in both respects. He certainly did so, for he compiled a Chinese dictionary. At first he adopted Chinese habits, cultivated a tail, let his nails grow, used chop sticks, and walked in thick decorated shoes; but he soon found this brought him no advantage, so it was all dropped. He felt "a zeal which bore up his mind, and enabled him, by the blessing of God, to persevere. He possessed rather fortitude than enterprise, and a severe judgment rather than a vivid imagination or inventive fancy; hence, to use his own words, 'he plodded on.' So desirous was he to acquire the language, that even his secret prayer to the Almighty was offered in broken Chinese."[1] The East India Company soon became annoyed at what Morrison did. But a baptism of fire animated the missionary amidst wearisome toils, and he "went on his way rejoicing." He founded the Anglo-Chinese College of Malacca in 1818; and the governor of the colony and other persons in authority were present at the laying of the first stone. He completed his Chinese Bible in 1819, and his Chinese and English dictionary, in six quarto volumes, in 1822. Ten years afterwards, he wrote: "I have been twenty-five years in China,

[1] Milne's *Retrospect.*

and am now beginning to see the work prosper. By the press we have been able to scatter knowledge far and wide."[1]

Polynesia was the first field of labour undertaken by the Society, and its fortunes there were of a varied character. In 1809 all seemed hopelessly lost, but in a few years we find it recorded of Tahiti: "Aged priests and warriors, with their spelling books in their hands, might be seen sitting on the benches in the schools, by the side perhaps of some smiling little boy or girl, by whom they were now taught the use of letters. Others might be often seen employed in pulling down the houses of their idols, and erecting temples for the worship of the Prince of peace, working, in companionship and harmony, with those whom they had so recently met on the field of battle."

The mission of John Williams, in 1816, marks an epoch in Polynesian history. He was a personal friend, and most of what I say is drawn from recollections of his story as related by his own lips. Simple and unostentatious, and, in the worldly sense of the word, unambitious, he was enthusiastic, communicative, and genial—with a taste for science, and with a capability for striking out novel generalizations. He combined mechanical genius with high intellectual qualities, and he possessed a dexterous power of invention, with a versatile handiness, rarely equalled. Anecdotes which he related of the shifts he was driven to, and of expedients he devised to meet them, were as diverting as they were instructive.

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[1] *Memoir of Morrison*, p. 275.

Foremost amongst the facts of his life, and which he described with solemn earnestness, was his conversion. For he had been a careless youth ; and as he was listening to a sermon on one occasion, by accident it would be said, the truth of God went home to his heart, and he became a new man. The change did not alter his intellectual, emotional, and social nature, it only gave a new bias to the faculties with which he had been endowed. After his conversion, Christianity stirred his mind and heart ; in short, as in the case of St. Paul, for these are no worn-out terms of experience, "the life" he "lived in the flesh" he lived "by the faith of the Son of God, who," he could say, "loved me, and gave Himself for me." His mission, as he always said, was first to Christianize the natives. "I preached my first sermon to them," he adds, "from one of the most delightful texts of the Bible, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' It was a delightful sight," he goes on to remark, "to behold from 1,500 to 2,000 people, just emerged from heathenism, of the most uncultivated appearance, some with long beards, others decorated with gaudy ornaments, but all behaving with the greatest decorum, and attending, with glistening eyes and open mouth, to the wonderful story." Do any ask, "Could uncivilized men make anything out of Christianity so simply, promptly, unpreparedly presented in their own tongue from foreign lips ?" They could, for they did. No doubt, Christianity has depths and breadths and heights of mystery which only cultivated intellects can appre-

hend and appreciate. But it has a sunny surface, which catches the perception of a child, and can soothe the heavings of a savage breast. Its blended Divinity and humanity have an unrivalled charm, and the Life and Love, the Death and Redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, when related unaffectedly, and with the whole mind and heart, exemplify—to take no higher ground—the poetical maxim, enforced by Matthew Arnold, that "there is an immortal strength in the stories of great actions." This greatest of all actions, the salvation of a world, has proved its power to rivet the attention and to rouse the passions of Hottentots and Hindus, Greenlanders and Esquimaux.

But Williams, when he had rehearsed the old, old story to the people of Raratonga, could not stop there. He knew and felt that, as the gospel was meant to guide wanderers into the promised land of truth and love, so also it was meant to develop and purify all gifts which lie buried, all aspirations which slumber in the rudest natures. Hence, the innermost springs of his own native genius were touched; and his inventiveness and skill were laid under contribution, to uplift and ennoble the daily life of the degraded southern races. In conversation with him, as in reading his book, you never missed the missionary; but found, at unexpected moments, the civilizer, the mechanic, the hundred-handed inventor of conveniences and comforts. He would tell you how he taught the natives to burn lime, to build a ship, to make a pair of bellows. These, and kindred incidents, he would vividly represent with inexhaust-

ible humour. Houses and chapels were erected under his superintendence. Candle-nut, bread-fruit, and cocoa-nut trees were turned to novel uses. The language was studied; the eight dialects of Eastern Polynesia were reduced to grammatical form. Books were written and printed. The Scriptures were translated into the vernacular, schools were established, laws and institutions were improved; and, in relating what had been accomplished amongst the beautiful coral reefs of the Pacific, Williams always insisted that the Christianity of the people did not arise out of their civilization, but that their civilization was an outgrowth of their Christianity.[1] The work carried on abroad reacted on work carried on at home. Though at first many Independent pastors looked with suspicion on missionary proceedings, and various objections, now almost forgotten, were urged against it, they gradually died out, and the whole denomination became bathed in a spirit of missionary ardour. For some years it was common to hear those who had been "converted" to the missionary cause, and those who had been "revived" by its good tidings, testify to the benefits they had received through its generous inspirations. Many Churches were roused from apathy to work "with a will" for the good of others. Missionary meetings became common, auxiliary Societies were formed, and anniversaries held where deputations went to argue, instruct, and appeal. Argument was still necessary, seeing that doubters lingered in the field;

[1] Williams' martyrdom did not occur until 1839.

and at length objections to missions were so thrashed, that some were wearied with the noise of the barn-floor. When missionaries came home with simple tales, especially when Williams related his Polynesian adventures, crowded congregations were taken by storm, and cheers and laughter blended with tears and prayers. Missionaries, perhaps accompanied by native converts, through what they said on platforms, and by intercourse with friends in houses where they lodged, carried the contagion into remote corners, and made selfish people happy through a new-born love.

Amongst Congregationalists there was more of life and activity than amongst Presbyterians, but they did not occupy the same position as their neighbours in point of culture and literary fame. Still they numbered a few who in this respect are worthy of notice. The Taylors of Ongar are to be distinguished from the Taylors of Norwich, and though not so well known now as they were in a former generation, they have not quite passed out of recollection. Jane and Anne Taylor's hymns, once studied in every nursery, are still lisped by children. Their father, Isaac, wrote elementary books; and the edition of *Calmet* by Charles, brother of Isaac, holds its place in a library of learning. Isaac, son of the Ongar minister, before the year 1830, published his *Elements of Thought*, and his *History of the Transmission of Ancient Books to Modern Times*. The Gilberts of Nottingham were a branch of the same family; and the Memoirs of Mrs. Gilbert, sister of Jane Taylor, and joint authoress of the hymns, is worthy of a

place side by side with *Memorials of a Quiet Life.* Josiah Conder was a staunch Independent, and an industrious literary workman. Poetry, editorship, criticism, history, topography—nothing came amiss to him ; but the chief pillar of his fame is found in his hymns, which are sung in thousands of churches at home, in the United States, and in our colonies. Beyond other members of the Congregational body, he associated and corresponded with illustrious literary men of his time, especially with Robert Southey.

CHAPTER X.

BAPTISTS.

1800–1830.

THE third constituency represented by the three denominations consisted of Baptists. Baptists resembled Independents. Difference as to the subjects and the mode of baptism alone divided them. The Baptists of the metropolis had their own Board; their Church order and worship were much the same as those of the Independents, and their country associations bore a strong likeness to such as were established by their brethren. Particular or Calvinistic Baptists remained distinct from the General or Arminian Baptists; and to prevent confusion, I shall notice the former first.

There is more unity in Baptist history than in the history of Independents during the early part of the century. Baptists had stronger sympathies with each other; for their denominational zeal rallied round one distinct institute, the name of which ever shone on their banners. They, for the most part, co-operated more intimately, and with less diversity of organization and action, perhaps with a greater amount of *esprit de corps;* moreover, to any one writing their history at the period, they supply links

of connection in three controversies, which they carried on without destroying denominational unity. The hypercalvinistic controversy, the communion controversy, and the Serampore controversy were so many family discussions.

In the first of these, Andrew Fuller and John Martin come prominently forward. Andrew Fuller, down to his death in 1815, remained the patriarch of his people. He lived at Kettering, preaching sermons from week to week, full of solid, striking, and oftentimes original thought. They might be too theological for some, but they were thoroughly appreciated by others, who really received a theological education from their minister. Not a broad reader, he was a deep thinker; and it is related of him that when some one noticed the smallness of his library and compared it with that of his Independent neighbour, he remarked, "Mr. Toller reads books, and I write them." The works of Hussey and Gill, two sturdy Calvinists, had long been popular in Baptist congregations, teaching them that general exhortations to repent and believe the gospel were unwarrantable, because, from inability to discharge such duties, unconverted people were released from the obligation. "Attempts to call sinners to the obedience of faith were stigmatized as savouring of Arminian legality."[1] So bad was the influence, that Fuller, in very strong language, said,[2] "had matters gone on but a few years, the Baptists would have

[1] *Help to Zion's Travellers.* Preface by Robert Hall.
[2] *Memoirs of Andrew Fuller*, by Morris, p. 214.

become a perfect dunghill in society." He had been brought up in extreme opinions himself, and he could bear witness to their pernicious tendency. In opposition to errors, floating far and near, Fuller published, so early as 1785, his noted essay on *The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation.* The object of it was to establish the truth that men are under moral obligation to believe the gospel—a proposition so generally admitted, that most readers will wonder what occasion there could be to write on the subject. But there was occasion, and Fuller did his work admirably well. The book was attacked, and to these attacks the author replied. Only one of his antagonists need be noticed. John Martin was pastor of a chapel near Russell Square. There must have been good qualities in the man to secure, as he did, the affection and reverence of many who, half a century ago, used to speak of him in the warmest terms; but he came under the lash of his brethren for defective views of civil and religious liberty, and by his deference to distinguished persons who favoured him with their acquaintance. Robert Hall insisted upon the love of freedom as the main Nonconformist safeguard. "Let the Dissenters at large," he said, in 1791, "remember they are a minority—a great minority, and that they must look for their security from that quarter, not from the compliments of bishops, or presents from maids of honour."[1] In a note the writer adds, "Some of my readers, perhaps, need to be informed that I here allude to

[1] Hall's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 47.

Mr. Martin, who, like Mr.——, has been considerably caressed by certain bishops, who have condescended to notice and to visit him. I think we do not read that Judas had any acquaintance with the high priests, till he came to transact business with them." This is a clever thrust, but certainly it looks uncourteous and uncharitable; though on turning to the account of the transaction referred to as given by Mr. Martin himself, and to circumstances related by his successor at Keppel Street,[1] one cannot be surprised that a person like Robert Hall should express himself strongly on the subject. With unfaithfulness to liberal principles, Mr. Martin coupled opposition to Fuller's views of the gospel, though for a time he had himself adopted them. He published *Thoughts on the Duty of Man relative to Faith in Jesus Christ*, in which he represented "faith to be a gift rather than a duty; or not a duty, because it is a gift." He had one short argument, "Will any man tell me that it is my duty to do that without Divine assistance which I can only do with?" Beyond this he could not advance a step. "When he lifted up his feet," as Fuller said, "he was always careful to put them down again in the same place."[2] Fuller answered Martin, and Martin answered Fuller; but to dwell on the controversy would be wearisome. Enough has been said to indicate the relative position of the two men. Martin represented others who maintained erroneous principles, which were happily

[1] See Irving's *History of the English Baptists*, p. 340.
[2] Morris' *Memoir of Fuller*, p. 236.

kept in check by Christian truths respecting holiness of life, which were logically inconsistent with High Calvinism. Theoretical Antinomianism did by no means invariably run into corresponding practice. Amongst upholders of high doctrine were found many persons exemplary in the inculcation and discharge of moral and pious duties. The tendency of a system is no doubt a test of its real character; but after a tendency has been logically established, it must be remembered that people are not always logical, and that they are sometimes better and sometimes worse than the distinctive systems by which they are commonly known.

The second controversy introduces us to Robert Hall and Joseph Kinghorn. Hall's ministry at Leicester extended from 1809 to 1826, and it formed the most brilliant epoch of his life. Some of his most remarkable discourses were delivered in an humble edifice of that town in Harvey Lane. "*The advantage of knowledge to the humbler classes*," and "*The death of the Princess Charlotte*," were themes which within those walls called forth bursts of the rarest eloquence. His fame ran through the kingdom and attracted numerous strangers from all parts, who travelled to Leicester on purpose that they might enjoy one of his Sunday ministrations. His society was sought, and his retirement was invaded by enthusiastic admirers, whose interruptions he long bore with fortitude, but was at last compelled to defer such audiences until evening, when his work was done. It was at Leicester that he wrote his work on *Terms of Communion*, first published in 1815. The

point in dispute related to the limits of admission to the Lord's Table amongst those who held Baptist opinions; strict communionists confining it to those who had, as adults, been baptized by immersion, open communionists admitting to the Sacred Supper all consistently professing Christians, whether they had been baptized or not. He adduced reasons in support of open communion from the obligation of brotherly love, from express injunctions of Scripture respecting the conduct of Christians towards those of different opinions, from the fact that Pædobaptists are part of the true Church, from the circumstance that their exclusion was considered a punishment, from the impossibility of reducing strict communion to a general principle, and from the impolicy of the practice. This work on terms of Christian fellowship was succeeded, in 1816, by an essay on the essential difference between Christian baptism and the baptism of John, in reply to a plea for primitive communion, in which it was contended that in New Testament times baptism preceded participation in the Lord's Supper, and an appeal was made to the baptism of John, before the institution of the Eucharist, as favouring the strict communion principle. It is common to look upon this controversy between Hall and Kinghorn as sectarian and ephemeral, but this is quite a mistake. Though, as to form, it certainly was limited, in the instance under review, to the Baptist body, the discussion really applies to the practice of almost every Church in Christendom, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, whether established or independent; for most make baptism

a term of communion. Before a person is allowed to receive the sacrament of bread and wine, he must be baptized with a baptism of water. Kinghorn might so far be regarded as representing Churchmen in general, whilst Hall advocated the rights of individuals in particular. Moreover, the doctrine laid down by the latter has a bearing on ecclesiastical discipline at large; it includes an answer to the inquiry, how purity of faith and conduct shall be preserved, without any infringement of the principles requisite to make every Church a portion of that sublime invisible society, the Church universal, constituted of all the members of Christ's "mystical body."

Joseph Kinghorn was pastor of a Baptist Church in Norwich, from 1789 to 1832. I have heard him compared in appearance to Dr. Priestley; in some other respects Mr. Kinghorn would have regarded the comparison as no compliment, but Priestley was said to embody the idea of Ariel, suggested by Milton. Again and again I have thought of the same likeness, when reviving my recollections of Kinghorn. He was a Hebrew scholar; the city rung with his fame in this respect; and when the Duke of Sussex went down to the Norwich festival, the Baptist minister was introduced to him as a celebrity. They conversed respecting the Hebrew language, in which his royal highness took great delight; but the worthy Baptist thought little of his royal highness' scholarship. Kinghorn was almost worshipped by his congregation, who regarded him as a sage, and deemed it a high honour to receive him into their houses. He was a keen controversialist, without bitterness;

and hence, in writing to a friend, he says, "I have spent about twelve days at Leicester with Mr. Hall. I am more than ever attached to him. I had the opportunity of perceiving that devotional spirit which, perhaps, few comparatively enjoy. We had some pleasant chat about his book, but could not convince each other. He said I must be numbered amongst the incurables. I told him he must expect an attack from Norwich. He was pleased to say, that he could not be replied to by a more respectable man than Mr. Kinghorn ; what he would write would be worth reading."[1]

Kinghorn did write accordingly, and further publications by Hall and himself speedily followed. The Norwich minister contended that if obedience to a rite be not a term of communion, which he said no one supposed, yet it was ordered by the highest authority as an evidence of submission to the author of salvation, and that a Christian's confession is not made in Christ's own way without it. He further insisted, that in every instance where the history of the first planting of a Church is detailed, it was composed of those who believed and were baptized. Baptism, he said, was intended to be a visible evidence of connection with the Christian Church. Though I totally differ from his conclusions, I do not think that justice has been done to his ability and acuteness. He had none of the eloquence of his friend, nor of his broad glances at principles in their harmony and relations, nor of Hall's impassioned warmth ; but,

[1] Wilkins' *Life of Kinghorn*, p. 355.

granted his premises, he was not unfair in his conclusions. Nor could he be set down as narrow-minded. Nobody who knew him gave him such a character. His catholicity of spirit in all other matters except this one was unquestionable, and he could and did maintain, that "brotherly love and love to the image of Christ, will and ought to lead us to walk with others, as we walk in common in the ways of Christ; or to show love to men at the expense of obedience to the directions of the Lord." [1]

The third Baptist controversy—that in 1828, with regard to the Serampore mission—need not detain us. But a reference to it is demanded, since it troubled the peace of the body for some years. It involved no question of principle. It was of transient though of bitter interest. It placed in antagonism some of the best men of the denomination, a few maintaining charges which they sincerely thought were true, and others denying those charges, because they said they knew them to be false. The accusations represented "an extensive revenue," and large pecuniary resources as possessed by the Serampore College; and there was attributed to the brethren superintending it, the assumption of authority, and an indulgence in extravagant habits. The secretary and committee of the Society in England believed certain damaging reports, and the persons accused denied the allegations. There were mistakes, lapses of Christian charity, and unjustifiable expressions of feeling on both sides; a lamentable rupture consequently en-

[1] *Baptism a Term of Communion*, pp. 18, 21.

sued, and the Serampore establishment became separated from the parent stem. Hall and Kinghorn were on one side; John Foster, the essayist, on the other.[1]

This mention of the controversy brings before us a more pleasant subject—the Baptist Missionary Society. It was founded at Kettering in 1792, and the man who took the lead in the enterprise is worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance.

A few years before the end of the eighteenth century, William Carey lived in a Northamptonshire village, and with the exercise of his humble trade as a shoemaker, he combined the study of Greek and Latin. Upon entering his workshop, one might have seen "a large map suspended on the wall, composed of several sheets pasted together, in which was entered every particular he had been able to glean relative to the characteristics, the population, and the religion of every country then known. While engaged in making or mending shoes, his eyes were often raised from the last to the map; and his mind employed itself in traversing the regions of the globe, musing on the condition of heathen tribes, and devising the means of evangelizing them." In the House of Commons, one—no other than William Wilberforce—said of this once obscure individual, "that a sublimer thought cannot be conceived than when a poor

[1] For information on the subject, see Cox's *History of the Baptist Mission;* Hall's *Works*, vol. iv. p. 415, vol. vi. p. 189; Marshman's *Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward*, vol. ii. pp. 303–396; and *Life of John Foster*, vol. ii. p. 100, *et seq.*

cobbler formed the resolution to give to the millions of Hindus the Bible in their own language." While Burke and Fox, with large political views, were in one way preparing for the future of our Indian Empire, Carey was working in another direction towards the same end. He became a minister, and preached one of those sermons the memory of which lives for ever, through qualities richer than eloquence. "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations,"—that was his text; and the drift of his discourse is embodied in two brief sentences, which have gained an axiomatic currency amongst missionaries—"Expect great things *from* God," "Attempt great things *for* God." He was sent out by the Baptist Missionary Society, founded in 1792. In 1794 we find him at work in the Sunderbunds, erecting huts for his family on a piece of land cleared out of a jungle. Within an incredibly short space, this working man of the midland counties formed a class of pupils for the study of Sanscrit, Persian, and Bengalee. Five years afterwards he had a translation of the New Testament, in the last of these languages, ready for the press. Four years later, when Pitt was prime minister, the college of Fort William received a permanent existence, in spite of the opposition of the East India Company; and, at the same time, we discover Carey on the staff of Oriental professors—a post which he maintained, with growing honour to himself and increasing advantage to the Institution, for twenty years. And, on one occasion, when the Governor-General took his seat in the throne room

of Calcutta, with learned Brahmins, and "plumed and jewelled" Rajahs and officers, crowding round the steps of the dais, the modest missionary professor rose, and said: "I now, an old man, have lived for a long series of years among the Hindus. I have been in the habit of preaching to multitudes daily, of discoursing with the Brahmins upon every subject, and superintending schools for the instruction of Hindu youth. The language is nearly as familiar to me as my own, and knowing them as I do, I am warranted to say, that this college was wanted to complete the happiness of the natives under our dominion." What, by means of that establishment, and by means of the Serampore mission, with Carey at the head, was accomplished through the culture of native intellect, and through the publication of Scripture in forty Oriental dialects, many an old Indian loves to tell.

Missionary zeal led to the acquisitions made by Carey, and to all their literary consequences. The knowledge of languages was not the cause of his going to India as a teacher of Christianity; but his going there for this end was the origin of his subsequent Oriental erudition. The translation of the Scriptures is a necessary part of missionary effort; and that fact, in the case of Carey and others, gave a strong impetus to the acquisition of foreign tongues. The motive which influenced them has played an important part in the history of Oriental studies during the present century.

Carey followed the steps of Jerome and Ulphilas, of Wycliffe and Tyndale. What they did for Latins,

Goths, and Englishmen, he sought to accomplish for Hindus. Without question his work was imperfect, perhaps very imperfect. No early version can be otherwise. Even after years and years of labour, after repeated careful revision, flaws will be detected. The work lately executed in the Jerusalem Chamber shows, that after all which was effected by Wycliffe, and Tyndale; after all that followed in the Great Bible, the Genevan Bible, the Bishops' Bible, and King James' Bible; still the ripest scholarship and the most painstaking and patient diligence were requisite to correct inaccuracies and to supply defects. Therefore, nobody can wonder that Carey's translations have been criticised, and that they needed much improvement.

But we shall unjustly narrow the effect of his studies in the East if we do not remember that they proceeded beyond circles of ecclesiastical thought. His Sanscrit grammar has been highly spoken of by competent judges; and to the importance of that language, testimony was borne in Carey's time by Lord Wellesley, when he pronounced it "the source and root of the principal vernacular dialects throughout India."

Carey was the prince of Baptist missionaries, and took the lead in the Indian campaign; but others, not so well known to outside fame, are worthy of being enrolled with that Oriental scholar. Marshman and Ward were his companions when, in 1799, he started on his enterprise. Marshman was a poor weaver, but a man of insatiable intellectual curiosity, an omnivorous reader, with a prodigious memory,

which would have made a noise in literary circles had Marshman been one of the favoured *élite*. When he reached India, he laboured in company with Carey, entered into his plans, and helped him in his learned enterprises. He became acquainted with Henry Martyn, and arm in arm they would walk and talk together like brothers on the banks of the Hooghly. He boldly ventured on the study of Chinese, and actually translated the New Testament into that language as early as 1807. Ward had been connected with the English periodical press, and edited a provincial newspaper. Afterwards he studied for the ministry, with a view to missionary work, and offered himself to the Baptist Society. He started with Marshman and two others, in 1799, to join Carey at Serampore. He laboured assiduously in the translation and printing of the Scriptures, and engaged in the study of *Hindu Mythology, Literature and Antiquities*, the result of which appeared in a publication of four volumes with that title. In 1819 he revisited his native country, and died of cholera at Serampore in 1822.

No favour at the outset was shown to these noble-minded men by Anglo-Indian authorities. On the contrary, they prohibited the establishment of a mission; but to their everlasting disgrace, and to his everlasting honour, the Danish governor of Serampore allowed them to reside in *his* settlement, and endeavoured to aid in the work they had undertaken to accomplish. It reflects sadly on the state of public opinion in this country, that the conduct of its representatives in the East could be tolerated for a moment.

Things had strangely changed when, years afterwards, Carey made his speech in the throne room of Calcutta.

The men I have mentioned constituted the Serampore triumvirate, who figured largely in the controversy of 1807, when a famous war was carried on against the Indian mission. Between twenty and thirty pamphlets were published in a few months, and one string on which antagonists harped was, that the introduction of Christianity, and attempts at converting the natives, imperilled the Eastern empire, shook the confidence of the natives, and was likely to breed rebellion. "If," it was said, "India was deemed worth preserving, we should endeavour to regain the confidence of the people by the immediate recall of every missionary."[1] Episcopal opinion was cited in favour of this opposition to impertinent missionaries. "The late Bishop of St. Asaph," it was said, "a sound and orthodox divine, and one of the main pillars of our good old Church of England, deprecated all such interference."[2]

The *Edinburgh Review* opened its columns to help on the anti-missionary assault, and Sydney Smith,

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[1] From a pamphlet by Major Scott Waring.

[2] *Ibid.* It further illustrates the state of opinion on the subject to cite the following passage: "The first sheet of the Gospel of St. Matthew was presented to the Governor-General, who, as the Serampore press was greatly in want of funds, was requested to head a subscription list for the printing of the Chinese version of the sacred Scriptures. After some deliberation, and fearing that such an act would be misinterpreted, he declined to do so, but readily subscribed for ten copies of a translation of the writings of Confucius, which Mr. Marshman had made." —*Protestant Missions in India*, edited by Storrow, p. 72.

already referred to, wrote an abusive review. But the Baptist Society had no lack of defenders competent to meet the enemy in the gate. Fuller came forward to the rescue; Hall addressed the chairman of the East India Company; and Adam Clarke wrote a pamphlet in support of Indian missions. When the renewal of the Company's charter was under consideration in 1813, Kinghorn received a letter from Bishop Bathurst, in which he said, "The conduct of these missionaries at Serampore has been uniformly such as to entitle them to the assistance and favourable opinion of every man who has more at heart the real interests of vital Christianity than the spread of his own peculiar opinions. A sentiment like this, I well know, will expose the man who utters it to the imputation of lukewarmness and indifference to religion, and he may probably be reviled as hostile to it, and meet with the ill usage which Moses did, when he said, 'Ye are brethren: why do ye wrong one to another?' but he must be content to bear this, and persevere in the practice of moderation and forbearance, waiting patiently for that hour when all our little prejudices and animosities will be over, and even our more generous affections also, save charity, which lives beyond the grave."[1]

The purposes of the inimical party were in the end defeated; the Baptist mission went on and prospered. Andrew Fuller was its mainstay to the end of life. He acted as secretary from its origin, in 1792, to the

[1] This letter is printed in the *Life of Kinghorn*, by Martin Hood Wilkin.

time of his death, in 1815. During that period he was incessantly engaged in managing its business, advocating its claims, travelling on its behalf through Great Britain from end to end, and carrying on a voluminous correspondence with the agents abroad. Some years after his death, a son of his had placed in his hands a folio volume by William Ward, one of the Serampore missionaries. "This," said he, "is a copy of all the letters your father wrote to us at Serampore, transcribed by a Hindu."[1] The transcriber was ignorant of the English language, but he faithfully covered six hundred pages, word for word, with copies of the original correspondence. Several of them have been printed, and they show the ceaseless care, the disinterested zeal, and the devout spirit of the writer. Legh Richmond said of some of Fuller's missionary papers, they seem "like specimens from the midst of heaven by the angel in his flight, with the everlasting gospel in his hand;" and we are reminded of this bold eulogium as we think of the lofty evangelical love manifested in Fuller's epistles to his missionary brethren, and of his large desires for the conversion of the heathen to the gospel of Christ. As long as he could hold a pen, he continued to write for the dearest object of his heart; twelve hours a day he sat at his desk, and shortly before he died, he exclaimed, as he left his pulpit, "All is over; my work is nearly over. I shall see you no more." Once more, however, he did enter the chapel at Kettering, and preached. On the 7th of May, 1815,

[1] *Memoirs of Fuller*, by his Son.

he died, like Jacob, with his family gathered round him.

Ryland died in 1825, and therefore neither he nor Fuller had to do with the Serampore controversy of 1825. At that period Marshman visited England, and represented the case of the brethren, he and Carey alone remaining of the original three; Ward had entered into rest six years before. Marshman explained the facts of the case, for it was entirely a question in relation to facts, and he satisfied many, but not all; his son tells us he returned to India "discomfited." But under new arrangements the work went on, the Serampore operations being conducted separately between 1827 and 1837. Extensive efforts were carried on in other parts of India.

John Foster, the essayist, and John Sheppard, of Frome, another well-known author, steadily promoted the Baptist mission. One portrait may stand for both. Each was reticent as to spiritual experience. Neither of them was much more than an occasional preacher, though Foster, for a short time, had a pastoral charge. The second caught part of the mantle and much of the spirit of the first. "It was a touching sight, when Sheppard's venerable form, refined alike in its outline and attitude, was discerned rising in the same pulpit (at Frome) from which, two-thirds of a century before, John Foster had given him the model of sacred eloquence which in form at least the pupil more than equalled."[1] Sheppard's *Thoughts* aided the devotion of many friends.

[1] Memoir prefixed to Sheppard's *Thoughts*.

Foster's *Essays* penetrated beyond the ranks of dissent. Catherine Stanley, mother of the late Dean, was greatly struck with these productions when they first came out; and then in 1809 she says, "I am inclined to pass over all faults of language in Akenside and Foster (with many other authors I could name, Wordsworth and Southey for instance), for the sake of ideas which they may occasionally express ill. I have been more delighted with Foster, on reading him again, even than I was before; his manner of thinking comes nearer to my own feelings and thoughts than any book I ever read." "I value him, not only for the reflections which he makes himself, but for those which he invariably leads me to make upon my own character every time I take him."[1]

There were other institutes, besides that for the conversion of the heathen, which the Particular Baptists established, attaching to each of them a denominational title, indicative of the principle of their fellowship, and also manifesting the importance they attached to it.

Like the Presbyterians and the Independents, they, or at least the most influential portion of the body, had been careful to provide for the education of candidates for the ministry. The Bristol Academy originated during the earlier years of the last century; and in 1804 the Northern Baptist Education Society was formed; Bradford, in Yorkshire, being chosen as the site of another "school of the prophets." The commencement was on a small scale, but the number

[1] Memoir by her son, p. 131.

of students increased, and public confidence advanced so that in 1824 a new building was necessary, and the Academy, or College, as it came to be called, rose to greater importance than before. For many years Baptists united with Pædobaptists in supporting the *Evangelical Magazine;* but in 1809 it was thought expedient to issue a periodical called the *Baptist Magazine*, "because intended to be a repository for the Baptists' use." Started in the West of England, it was in 1813 removed to London, and placed under an editorial committee. Coeval with the rise of this publication was another enterprise, through which the London Education Society merged in the Institution at Stepney. It was not to rival similar provincial undertakings, but to provide for the wants of the metropolis and its neighbourhood. In 1810 the scheme was announced; in 1812 we find it in working order.

In 1812 "a general association of the Particular Baptists" was projected, and a meeting in Carter Lane, Southwark, carried the project into execution. The promotion of Christianity in general, and the interests of the denomination in particular, were the professed objects, "both with a primary view to the encouragement and support of the Baptist mission"; thus evangelization abroad became a bond of union at home. It has proved so in a number of instances.

Two years had scarcely passed, when another field was selected. The Baptist Irish Society commenced in the year 1814, and both Fuller and Ryland supported it, their approval being practically expressed

by a donation from funds in the hands of their missionary committee. Joseph Ivimey, to whom, it seems, the institution owed its origin, became secretary; and Andrew Fuller sent a letter of advice recommending more anxiety about men and measures than about pecuniary supplies, and he drew encouragement from the fact that contributions at the first meeting exceeded the memorable collection at Kettering in 1792.

Especially solicitous for those of their own household, building up the Baptist interest wherever they could, the leaders were not deficient in Catholic sympathies; and to them, especially the pastor of the Baptist Church, Hackney, Dr. F. A. Cox, must be ascribed a brilliant effort in 1817 to celebrate the third century of the Protestant Reformation. That year was chosen, I suppose, because in 1517 Luther begun his attack on the sale of indulgences by Tetzel; but stress was laid on the 30th of December, being, as was said, "the day of the death of Wickliffe, our British Reformer, justly celebrated as the morning star of the Reformation." A meeting of all denominations was held, at that date, in the large room of the London Tavern, under the presidency of the Duke of Sussex. No less than seventeen resolutions were passed, whether altogether or in succession I do not know, but all expressive of Protestant sentiments, and of glowing sympathies with the old Reforming heroes of Germany, Switzerland, England, and Scotland. They were drawn up by Mr. John Wilks, secretary of the Protestant Society; and after they had been passed, thanks were

returned to the Baptist friends with whom the proposal for the commemoration originated.

With some of these proceedings, especially those which prepared for the union, the name of Dr. Rippon is associated. He presided over a congregation in Carter Lane, Tooley Street, near St. Olave's Church—a neighbourhood once covered with proud ecclesiastical edifices and garden grounds. He derived some importance from his being the immediate successor of Dr. Gill, the great Rabbi-commentator; and it adds something to the interest of Rippon's name that the present Rev. C. H. Spurgeon is a successor in the pastorate of his church. In himself, the divine who came between these two celebrities is worthy of notice. He was educated in the Baptist Academy at Bristol, and came to Carter Lane in 1773, immediately after Dr. Gill's death. He maintained an extensive popularity for many years, and took a leading position among the ministers of the day, preaching often on public occasions of interest. His sermons are said to have been remarkable for their "vivacity, fervour, quaintness, and point." He was known by his contemporaries as editor of the *Baptist Annual Register*, which preceded the *Baptist Magazine;* but he is better known to posterity as editor of a collection of hymns. Some years ago Rippon's Hymn-book was as commonly used by Baptists as that by Watts was used by Independents Not that Rippon was a poet; he only compiled, but what he did in that way must have been judicious, seeing that his work obtained a large circulation. It is curious that Carter Lane and Mazepond should

have been the hotbed of troubles about hymnology. The people at the latter place objected altogether to the service of song. Members of the church complained to Dr. Gill of the tunes which they were required to sing. "What tunes," he asked, "would you like?" "David's tunes," replied the complainants. "Well," rejoined the Rabbi, "if you will get David's tunes, we will try them."[1] The unpopularity of singing must have abated in Rippon's day, but the contemporary hymns were not suited to his taste. It is the labour he bestowed upon their improvement which has given him such fame as he possesses. His musical efforts are not so generally known. We are told of the close of the last century, that "the most extensive manufactory of tunes was at Dublin," in Lady Huntingdon's chapel, where the choirs were supplied by certain lady composers. Rippon went to preach there, and being introduced to these modern Miriams, obtained from them the tunes they had composed. These tunes, together with adaptations of secular music, were sources of what has been called "the strange medley" sung in churches and chapels for fifty years afterwards. Some of them caught the public ear, and were extensively employed. What

[1] In New England many congregations split on the musical question. "If we once begin to sing by note," they said, "the next thing will be to pray by rule, and then comes Popery." The interposition of the General Court was, in some instances, necessary to quiet disturbances arising from the proposal to sing by rule. (*The Church of Hartford*, p. 75.) Singing "by rule," instead of "singing by ear," referred to the use of musical notes.

Rippon obtained at Dublin, it seems, chiefly composed his *Collection of Tunes*, first published in 1791. Carter Lane was favourable to longevity: Gill was pastor for fifty-one years, Rippon for fifty-four. The old meeting-house had to make way for the present London Bridge, and the congregation migrated to New Park Street. Rippon continued to preside over the people till his death in 1836, at the age of eighty-five.

Before I conclude my account of the Particular Baptist denomination, it is proper to add that in it were some of the most advanced advocates of liberty and reform to be found in the country during a time of great political excitement. At the commencement of the century three ministers of the denomination distinguished themselves by opposition to the policy of Mr. Pitt. As early as 1793 Robert Hall published an *Apology for the Freedom of the Press and for General Liberty*, in which he advocated reform, including annual parliaments and universal suffrage, and also attacked the principle of establishments with unsparing severity. Repudiating the theology of Price and Priestley, he eulogised them as friends of liberty and victims of intolerance; and on that account incurred bitter censure when he republished the *Apology* in 1822. But though his political principles remained unaltered, the only new production which he published on the subject was in reply to an attack on his character for having reprinted the essay first published in 1793. Mr. Winterbottom, a Baptist minister who had been imprisoned for libel before the beginning of the century, continued a firm advocate

of his early opinions, and attracted round him the friends of freedom when he visited different parts of the country. And Mark Wilks, who for many years was contemporary with Mr. Kinghorn at Norwich, was a well-known champion of the Liberal party in that city, zealously supporting the candidature of the famous Mr. Windham when he was a consistent Liberal, and as zealously opposing that gentleman when he changed his views.

A number of General Baptists, in the year 1770, were formed into a distinct body, under the name of "the New Connexion."[1] They were Evangelical Arminians, and Daniel Taylor stood at the head of this body. They believed in "the threefold distinction of the Divine nature," but objected to the use of the word "persons." They recognised the atonement of Christ and the work of the Spirit, and declared that God had from the beginning appointed believers to salvation, but that "His choice was made according to His foreknowledge." They defined a Church as consisting of faithful men, competent to manage their own affairs; but they grouped their Churches into districts, and held annual conferences, which, after being limited first to ministers and then to Church officers, were opened to members, so far resembling the Swiss cantons, where all the men make a parliament. Changes in organization, and in minor arrangements, seem to have been by no means uncommon.

The denomination did not widely spread its roots

[1] See *Religion in England*, vol. vi. p. 357.

in London. There, in the eighteenth century, were a few General Baptists of the old stock, but the congregations became extinct one after another, and it is remarkable how almost completely they had disappeared when the century expired. One minister, holding General Baptist views, presided over a church in Elim Court, Fetter Lane, where he gathered a flourishing congregation; and we are informed that behind the pulpit was an organ, "which appendage was found in few other places of worship amongst recognised Dissenters." What follows is enough to shock our sanatory sensibilities. "As the building is raised several feet from the ground, the space underneath is formed into a vault for the burial of the dead."[1]

Daniel Taylor came to the East of London and carried on his ministry in Church Lane, Whitechapel, for several years. He was a man of superior natural abilities, and did what he could to overcome defects in early education by diligent theological reading. He opened an academy in 1798, but the number of students was very small, the denomination not seeming to sympathise with its founder in a desire for educated teachers. When he had reached his seventieth year, he proposed to resign his office; and in a discourse at Loughborough, in 1807, he sketched the kind of person he wished to see as his successor. As there was no response to his appeals, he continued to officiate as tutor to the end of life.[2]

[1] Wilson, *History of Dissenting Churches in London*, vol. iii. p. 474.

[2] Bogue and Bennett, *History of Dissenters*, vol. ii. p. 540.

As at the beginning of the denomination, so afterwards, the midland counties, with parts of Yorkshire and Lincoln, absorbed its main strength, though in Kent and Essex, as well as in London, were a few small congregations. In the former of these chief divisions, revivals were of occasional occurrence; for a good deal of Methodist fervour obtained amongst the people, and their church life differed from that of General Baptists in times of yore. The number of converts and accessions varied as the spiritual thermometer rose and fell. Adam Taylor, chronicler of General Baptist history, is very honest in the relation of his facts, and mentions a number of instances where spiritual decline and the disturbance of harmony brought discredit upon the communities.[1]

John Gregory Pike distinguished himself as a pastor in the town of Derby, where he attracted a considerable audience. He published a number of books which attained a large popularity; and, amongst them, his *Persuasives to Early Piety* was for some long time a favourite with Evangelicals in general. There is another and still more valuable monument of his influence and worth in the General Baptist Missionary Society, of which he may be said to have been the founder. It commenced in 1816, and Orissa, the seat of Juggernaut, was selected as the field of its operations—a daring adventure, reflecting credit on the heroism of those who attempted so forlorn a hope. In May, 1821, two brethren, named

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[1] See *History of the English General Baptists*, vol. ii., by Adam Taylor.

Bampton and Peggs, proceeded to Cuttach, the principal town in the territory of the frightful god. The implied patronage of idolatry on the part of the British Government,—which levied a tax on pilgrims, and thereby supported disgusting forms of worship,—threw enormous obstacles in the way of the little band; but, shifting points of attack, and reinforcing their numbers from time to time, they carried on their crusade, not only by preaching, but by establishing schools and orphan asylums. Though the missionaries had to wait for six years before any Hindus were converted, the long night of toil was followed by a hopeful dawn, and the mission is reported to have produced "teachers and preachers of no mean order." Villages were formed for the reception of native Christians, as a remedy for the evils of caste; and the Scriptures were translated into the Orissa tongue.

There were at the beginning of this century a few Sandemanian Baptists in England. They adopted the peculiar views of faith inculcated by a Scotch theologian named Sandeman, who gathered Societies, not only at Edinburgh, but in Liverpool, Chester, Hull, Beverley, Nottingham, and other towns. Some Scotchmen of this class hired a room near Red Lion Square, London; and at the beginning of the century worshipped in Red Cross meeting-house, where they had two ministers, whom they called their bishops. They had a teacher beside, and used to dine together on Sundays, before breaking bread in the afternoon—thus adopting somewhat the primitive fashion of love feasts before communion. Sande-

manians also followed the early Christians in giving the kiss of charity ; not at every communion, but upon admission to membership.

Michael Faraday was a Sandemanian. His parents belonged to that communion, and in the highest glory of his scientific career he never forsook the Church of his father. He became, at a later date than is reached by this volume, a preaching elder, but did not carry into his pulpit the eloquence of the classroom. "His object seemed to be to make the most use of the words of Scripture, and to make as little of his own as he could."[1] "There is no philosophy in my religion," he wrote to a lady who wished to become his disciple. "I am of a very small and despised sect of Christians known, if known at all, as Sandemanians, and our hope is founded on the faith that is in Christ. But though the natural works of God can never, by any possibility, come in contradiction with the higher things that belong to our future existence, and must, with everything concerning Him, ever glorify Him, still I do not think it at all necessary to tie the study of the natural sciences and religion together ; and in my intercourse with my fellow-creatures, that which is religious and that which is philosophical have ever been two distinct things."[2]

Seventh-day Baptists, so called from their observance of the Jewish Sabbath—a sect which arose in England during the Commonwealth—propagated

[1] *Life and Letters*, vol. ii. p. 100.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

their views as far as Rhode Island, America, and perpetuated their existence in this country down to a recent date. A curious case arose about 1830. There were meeting-houses in Mill Yard, Goodman's Fields, and in Still's Alley, Devonshire Square, occupied by two congregations of this class. At the date mentioned each had dwindled down to a handful. In Mill Yard there were three men and seven women, the three men nephews of the minister, and five of the seven women members of the same family. The three men attended Episcopalian worship, but continued to join in seventh-day communion. The minister died. The meeting-house was shut up. The property was thrown into Chancery. Unfortunately there was an endowment connected with the building. New trustees were appointed; they advertised for a minister, and employed an Independent to officiate till a fitting Sabbatarian could be found. So things went on until only seven females remained, and sometimes not more than three were present at worship. Were the seven women a Church? That question was referred for decision to the general body of Dissenting ministers in London, who chose a committee to try the case. There were pleadings and counter-pleadings. The report of a single speech on one of the days covered 128 folios; and the committee decided that the seven women formed a Church, and were entitled to retain the property. It showed how far a principle may be pushed, and how endowments may be abused. Had such a hearing taken place in a court of law, it would have been a *cause célèbre*, and would have found a conspicuous

place in our law books.[1] Mr. Black, a well-known literary archæologist, for some time engaged at the Record Office, and in Dr. Williams' library, belonged to this community.

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[1] *Josiah Conder, a Memoir*, p. 261.

CHAPTER XI.

CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

1800–1830.

THE Evangelical section of the Establishment, and the professors of Evangelical Dissent, were separated by no distinct line at the opening of the century. "The Clapham sect" and the Barley Wood circle admitted Nonconformists to their friendship, and a typical example of this occurs in the case of John Thornton, Henry Thornton's father, who was intimate with William Bull, of Newport Pagnell, and sometimes took him as a companion on long excursions.

There were sacred buildings resembling chapels of ease, where the mode of conducting worship left uninitiated visitors doubtful as to where they were. The Church service was read by a surpliced minister, and the announcement might be heard, "The rector or vicar of so and so will preach here next Sunday." There were towers in the border country which Englishmen might call Scotch, and Scotchmen call English; and so there were Dissenters whom their brethren called Churchmen, and Churchmen whom their brethren called Dissenters.

Along the broad strip I will endeavour to conduct my readers.

In Clerkenwell parish a curious structure exists, which was more curious a hundred years ago. It had been a pantheon, with the goddess of Fame on the top of the dome. It was surrounded by tea gardens, which did not answer, and the proprietor turned his pantheon into a chapel of ease. That did not succeed, and in 1774 the Countess of Huntingdon bought the property, made the building a sort of cathedral for her "connexion"; and at the same time occupied as a residence the adjoining house, then covered with jasmine,—in fact, a snug rural retreat. After her death the place was continued for the use of her ministers, who gathered within the walls large congregations, the music being made attractive by a well-known organist, named Shrubsole.

Spa Fields was the centre of a circle sweeping over the country containing like buildings used for like worship.

Tottenham Court and the Tabernacle in Moorfields, built for George Whitefield, did not belong to the Countess' trust; but the congregation which met at the former place resembled his followers in their mode of worship. Originally it was registered "for the use of Nonconformist congregations calling themselves Independents"; because a licence could not be obtained for it unless some denominational title was adopted. This was assumed as most appropriate—though, in fact, the people worshipping there came nearer to Methodists than Independents. They were so far Independent, that they were free from external control; but they had little or no sympathy with the Independent Board, nor did they allow com-

municants a voice in ecclesiastical affairs. Power rested in the hands of "managers." Whitefield's name was so potent, that whilst those who filled his pulpit were animated by his memory, hearers were content if they recognised in the preachers' sermon the old Evangelical ring, and did not care much for church order. Churchmen and Dissenters met at the communion table; and Bacon, the sculptor, a friend of Richard Cecil's, was buried beneath the floor.

Before the century closed, Matthew Wilks became minister of both chapels. His curious physiognomy, harsh voice, and pointed sayings could not easily be forgotten; and these, with odd anecdotes of his social life, lingered long after he was gone. A much-talked of sermon which he preached for the London Missionary Society led to the establishment of local auxiliaries. He chose for his text, "Seest thou what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger."[1] The practical point urged by the preacher was that if men and women, old and young, were all busy in the service of idolatry, how much more ought we all to be so in the service of the true God. For many years Wilks was sole minister; then he had a minister named John Hyatt as a colleague, whose ministry proved very effective.

Rowland Hill, virtually a Calvinistic Methodist,

[1] Jeremiah vii. 17–19.

was vigorously at work in Surrey Chapel throughout the period under review. He never cared much for ecclesiastical rules, and would have liked to remain in the Establishment could he have been allowed full liberty of action. The only restrictive article in his trust deed was that the preaching should agree with the doctrinal articles of the Church, and that ministers of different denominations should officiate in the pulpit. The Liturgy was read on Sundays. However eloquent might be his substitutes, nobody was more popular at "Surrey" than its builder. He continued to preach, like John Newton, till the infirmities of age became too heavy to bear. I remember listening to him about the year 1828, when he had reached the age of eighty-three. The building was crowded to the doors, and when the venerable apostle with difficulty ascended the pulpit stairs, followed by his servant, every eye was fixed—for he was something to look at. His white hair, beaked nose, and piercing eyes, made a striking picture as he gazed on his audience, holding his spectacles with one hand, and shading his brows with the other. As soon as he began, his voice penetrated every corner. His sermon was rambling, but full of good things. In one part he addressed young people, saying, perhaps they were about to set up housekeeping, and there was one piece of furniture he would recommend—the looking-glass of a good conscience, kept clean and bright, in which they might see themselves pleasantly reflected. Now and then he proceeded with difficulty, as if at a loss, and kept looking at the clock to see how time went on; yet nobody seemed weary or disappointed. There was

so much in what the man was, as well as in what the man said—like St. John, who could chain the attention of Ephesian Christians with the simple words, "Little children, love one another." Almost to the end of life he continued to travel, loving much—on his way to Wotton-under-Edge, where he had a second chapel—to stop at Windsor and get some Eton boys to hear him. He would talk afterwards of his own Eton days, and how when at school he attended prayer meetings in the cottage of a poor woman whom he made one of his pensioners until the day of her death.[1]

Evangelicals, whether in the Establishment or out of it, were as welcome as his friends; and nothing pleased him more than to speak one day in a parish church, and the next in a Nonconformist meeting-house. He died in the year 1831.

Another instance of Calvinistic Methodism could be found in Orange Street. Next door to the house in which Sir Isaac Newton lived there remains a building which has met with strange fortunes. It belonged originally to the French refugees; then it was used by the famous Toplady for a Sunday and Wednesday evening lecture; then it was occupied by Richard Cecil—all the time continuing French property. A preacher at the Lock, named De Coetlegon, would have taken it, but the vicar of the parish would not allow it; and at last it was secured by some Evangelicals of no pronounced ecclesiastical opinions. They fitted it up in the "Lady Huntingdon" fashion.

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[1] This I learned from my father-in-law, who entertained Rowland Hill on his visits to Windsor.

A large congregation was gathered by preachers who officiated for a certain number of Sundays, the affairs being under the control of a committee of Churchmen and Dissenters.

Another place of this sort invites a passing glance. Islington is said to have been in a bad spiritual condition at the opening of the century, before Daniel Wilson went there; and a few pious people secured a chapel in Highbury Grove, where they invited, as their minister, a young man who had been a Methodist local preacher. This was Thomas Lewis, who preached with effect until 1804, when he was ordained at Orange Street Chapel. A larger building than that in the grove was soon required, and the congregation erected Union Chapel, in Compton Terrace, where a remarkable service occurred at the opening. The vicar of Olney, Mr. Gauntlet, read the Church service and preached in the morning; and in the evening a Presbyterian from St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin, led the devotions, after which Dr. Bogue, of Gosport, delivered a sermon. Buildings for the kind of worship conducted there were not often of an ornate description; but this had some unusual decorations, for the pastor wrote in his diary: "The remarks made by some people on our new chapel—on what they call its finery, and on so much money being expended on one place, when so many parts of the country are destitute of even a commodious house—are things which pain me."[1] Then he pro-

[1] The old Union Chapel, Islington, has made way for the large church in Compton Terrace, where my friend Dr. Allon is now minister. He succeeded Mr. Lewis.

ceeds to apologise for what had been done. It would need no apology now, and it just illustrates the temper of the times amongst united Evangelicals.

At the beginning of the century there was another mode of action which brought together a few Episcopalians and Nonconformists. It differed from the Bible Society and the Tract Society, being instituted for preaching the gospel, and beyond that for training up young men to preach, apart from sectarian views. They were to be itinerant missionaries, persuading people, not to be Churchmen or Dissenters, but Christians. A strong faith prevailed as to the existence of a common Christianity, fashioned neither by ecclesiastical order nor by creeds and confessions, but by Evangelical sentiment; and, upon this basis, the method of usefulness now described was made to rest. James Haldane, a pious Scotchman, promoted the plan of itinerancy, and was desirous of educating young men for the purpose. A little earlier, a Homerton clergyman named Eyre, elsewhere mentioned in this volume, employed, by the help of his congregation, several agents with a similar design, at first for preaching in villages around London. The two revivalists came into correspondence with each other. Haldane wanted to find a teacher for those he was about to employ, and applied to a Congregational minister at Walthamstow, named Collison, to accept the post. He consulted Mr. Eyre on the subject, when the latter said: "I have been planning something of the same kind, on a smaller scale, for the Christian ministry in England, and, what is remarkable, you are the person (Independent

though you are) that I have fixed upon to assist me in effecting my plans."[1] Eyre had already received large promises of pecuniary help, and had announced his scheme as being intended for the education of pious young people who were to introduce "the gospel into such situations as would otherwise be destitute of it." The good man died before the work began; but shortly after his funeral, Matthew Wilks was chosen secretary, and Mr. Hardcastle treasurer of the infant institute. Rowland Hill joined the committee. The origin of the plan and the character of the persons indicate the nature of the enterprise; and under the superintendence of Mr. Collison the educational department grew and prospered, until it took the name of Hackney College.

These efforts to shape something which should come between a State Establishment and pronounced Dissent, did not produce the results anticipated. The long-cherished desire of union gradually declined; circumstances and tendencies too strong to be resisted prevented its accomplishment, to the content if not the satisfaction of many, to the regret if not the lamentation of a few.

The old style of preaching among Calvinistic Methodists and Independents began to wane. Often a proper distinction was not made between theology as a branch of metaphysical science, and religion as comprising on the one hand the simple revelation of God to man, and on the other the experience of its power in human hearts. More knowledge of the-

[1] Quoted in Waddington's *Congregational History*, 1800–50.

ology was sometimes expected from communicants than their powers and advantages could lead any one to expect; and more of the formulas of theological thinking, as excogitated from a scholastic study of the Bible, were introduced, than tended to spiritual enlightenment and edification. The gospel sometimes was lost in an attempt to cork it up in small narrow-mouthed bottles. Nor was there a due apprehension of the mystery surrounding Divine revelations. It seems to have been supposed that a pretty complete system of the spiritual universe could be constructed; that the sublimest truths could be packed within the compass of a few propositions; and that personal piety much depended upon intellectual apprehensions. The beautiful story of the poor woman who said, "If I may but touch His garment I shall be whole," could not be forgotten; but it was not applied to the extent it might have been. To touch "the hem" was scarcely allowed to be sufficient; a grasp of complicated folds in the broad mantle was sometimes enforced as if essential to salvation. Of course there were instances to which these general remarks would not be applicable.

Beyond the circle of those commonly known as Calvinistic Methodists, there stood one who for a time adopted the name, but, being an extraordinary individual, he must be looked at by himself. William Huntington, who died in 1813, made a great noise, in some part at least of the religious world, sixty years ago. His name was an invention of his own, he being the child of a woman of abandoned character, whose husband's name was Hunt. He

appended to it, when he became popular, the title of S.S., "sinner saved," by way of satire, it would seem, upon M.A., D.D., and other letters appended to the names of ecclesiastical persons. When a youth, according to his own account, he was "hardened in sin"; and while living in the weald of Kent, as servant to a clergyman, he commenced a love adventure worthy, as Robert Southey says, "to be narrated by Mr. Crabbe." It would have been a capital tale for his kind of poetry. Romantic enough in some respects, the conclusion of it was utterly disgraceful to the unprincipled hero. After numerous strange adventures, he was suddenly converted. He was standing on a ladder one day at Christmas time, pruning a pear-tree against a garden wall, his mind full of blasphemous temptations. A horrid caricature of the doctrine of election had completely mastered him; do what he might, he could not be saved unless elected, and if elected he would be saved without doing anything at all. Therefore he resolved to strive no more. Suddenly a light shone on him bright as the sun; he saw two lines, election and reprobation, running in different directions, and he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Lay by your forms of prayer, and go pray to Jesus Christ." Forthwith there came on him the spirit of grace and supplication, and he prayed "with an eloquence, fluency, boldness, and familiarity as quite astonished" him. These are his own words. After being employed as a coal-heaver—a circumstance which gave him a nickname—he took to preaching, and assumed a "parsonic attire." What sort of preaching it was

may be inferred from the doctrine he embraced and from the writings he published. His interpretations of Scripture are wonderful, for he used to spiritualize everything in the Old Testament according to the fashion of his adopted dogmas. His *Bank of Faith* reveals notions of prayer the most extravagant ever written by fanatics, ancient or modern. Whatever he wanted in the way of provision, dress, horses, and luxuries, he asked for—and had. He prayed himself into the possession of a handsome country house, a carriage and pair, and other enjoyments; and the second wife of the coal-heaver was widow of a knight who had been Lord Mayor of London. He took care to let his enthusiastic admirers know what he wished, and in this way many answers to his prayers might be explained. He heard a voice which said, "Son of man, prophesy among the thick boughs," and he explained it as meaning that he should preach in London. He did so, and at length had a large chapel built for him in Gray's Inn Lane, which was secured to him as his own property. His manner in the pulpit differed from what might be supposed. His voice was clear and pleasant, and his large congregation did not lose a syllable; he never ranted, but spoke in a calm, persuasive style. A perfect Ishmaelite, he condemned everybody who did not agree with him, and therefore involved himself continually in personal controversies. He must have had in him pathos, as well as satirical power; for when writing to a friend, laden with infirmity, he says, "many warnings come about quitting this clay cottage, and much daubing, plastering, and new

material have been spent upon it, but the plague is in the house, the leprosy is in the walls, and the sad infection has spread itself, and therefore it must come down." And again, "My breath is short, my cruse empty, my oil fails, my heart is chilled, my old man is alive, and the devil is not idle." It is easier to estimate his mental than his moral character. That he was vastly clever there can be no doubt. That he was fanatical in the extreme is equally plain. Southey speaks of him as a rogue, and the man certainly showed himself unprincipled in many ways; but a touch of insanity his critic does not mention, though that, I think, must be added to the qualities of his dubious character. It is charitably supposed that he folded some of the Lord's sheep; perhaps so, but he folded goats as well.

Rowland Hill became an object of dislike to Huntington, though he treated him with less rudeness than he did some others. Both were quaint, and Hill's Calvinism was pronounced; but what a difference between the uncharitable Antinomian and the Catholic-spirited Evangelical![1]

[1] Southey says: "In the whole twenty volumes of his collected works we have noticed but one slip-slop blunder, the use of the word 'promiscuously' for 'chance.'" (*Quarterly Review*, vol. xxiv. p. 496.) I have in my possession an autograph letter of Huntington's, very characteristic and clever in its way, but full of bad spelling, and the whole of it abounding in blunders. There must have been a good corrector of his MSS. or his proofs.

The man who came nearest to Huntington in High Calvinistic popularity was Dr. Hawker, vicar of Charles the Martyr, Plymouth. His *Poor Man's Commentaries* and *Portions* were largely circulated in my young days. He was a very different character from Huntington, being remarkable for modesty, devoutness, and irreproachable piety.

CHAPTER XII.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

1800–1830.

WESLEYANISM, though resembling Calvinistic Methodism in revivalistic fervour, differed from it in doctrinal beliefs, and in ecclesiastical organization. Indeed, the latter can scarcely be said to have had any organization at all. But Wesley left the impress of his power of government on the system he bequeathed. He laid down principles and originated plans which, though occasioned by circumstances and appearing at successive dates, were animated by a spirit of order and harmony when they came to be combined. In systems of Church polity there are three main elements—the monarchical, the aristocratic, and the popular. The Papacy expresses the first, Presbyterianism the second, Independency the third. Methodism is not based on any one of these; but in the establishment of a Ministerial Conference, with a president in the chair, it unites a little of monarchical with a great deal of aristocratic or oligarchical influence. The popular element is not altogether excluded, but it was not strong at first. There was a place for laymen in circuit arrangements, yet their influence

was limited. Lay influence has increased of late years.

It could not be expected that in an increasing denomination, "many men with many minds" would see alike as to the relation which popular power should bear towards the Conference composed entirely of ministers. Controversy on the question speedily arose. The Deed of Declaration, adopted in Wesley's lifetime, looked at with critical eyes when the master-spirit was gone, suggested searching inquiries. Did the Deed give to the Conference absolute power, not only over the ministry, but over the people as well? Or did the Deed endow the people with a measure of power to regulate their own affairs, in certain respects, at leaders' meetings, local preachers' meetings, and quarterly meetings? In other words, had they a jurisdiction to be exercised independently in their own localities? The Conference party, if it may be so called, appears to have taken the former view, the popular party the latter. It is argued by an eminent authority in Methodist law, that "the Society submitted to the government of Mr. Wesley, and the preachers associated with him; and so became, in course of time, accustomed to look up to Wesley and the preachers assembled in Conference as a supreme authority; and that the Deed of Declaration, by securing to Conference its right of appointing ministers to chapels after Wesley's death, did, in point of fact, confirm its possession of supreme prerogatives."[1] It is argued by advocates on the other side

[1] Dr. Beecham's *Constitution of Methodism*, p. 30.

that the grant of authority to the Conference is limited to its own members ; and that interference with the affairs of the people in matters of legislation and control is an aristocratic encroachment. Whatever may be the conclusions reached on grounds of Scripture and reason, as to what *ought* to be the polity of the connexion, it will appear, I think, to most outsiders, that the first, not the second view accords best with the *historical* facts of the case. Wesley and the other Fathers did not believe in democratic government. They were not Independents, they leaned to Presbyterianism ; but their Presbyterianism did not come from Scotland, it was decidedly their own.

A painstaking Methodist historian maintains that fidelity to Wesley's principles, and a religious estimate of pastoral rights and responsibilities, no less than a conviction of what was necessary for perpetuating the connexion, induced the Conference, at the end of the last century, to reject every proposal to remove supreme power from ministerial hands by introducing laymen into the ruling body, or by the concession of independent authority to local meetings. But, he says, the Conference evinced a readiness to attend to every proposal for preventing an improper exercise of power.[1] He specifies details in the plan of pacification, 1795, which show that trustees, stewards, and leaders were vested with power to summons the ministers and lay officers of a district, between one meeting of Conference and another, to deal with preachers, immoral

[1] George Smith, LL.D., F.S.A., *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, vol. ii. p. 170.

in conduct, erroneous in doctrine, deficient in abilities, or guilty of violating Methodist rules. Questions of finance and other temporal matters were placed in a measure under lay control. "The laity equally with the clergy," says another authority, "are bound to assist in the management of the temporal affairs of the Church." "All local finances indeed, including those of chapels, were then, as now, under the sole control of lay officers; but the funds collected for the common purposes of the connexion were received and distributed by ministers only." [1]

Wesley had laid down principles and established precedents; but it required great wisdom on the part of his successors to carry on the work he had prosperously begun. The system had been sketched, not elaborated, by the master-hand; and a difficult task had to be executed by those who undertook, first the filling up, and then the preservation of the master's picture. Justice has not always been done to distinguished Methodist preachers at the beginning of the century. They, next to the founder, deserve the grateful recollections of the whole Society.

There are several points in Wesleyan history, during the first thirty years of this century, which require to be noticed in succession.

Revivals are inseparable from early Methodism. In Yorkshire, and especially at Dewsbury, "showers of blessing," to use Scripture language devoutly appropriated by Wesley's followers, had fallen, and left thankful remembrances for years afterwards. York-

[1] *The Life of Jabez Bunting, D.D.*, by his son Percival, p. 229.

shire was in this respect a "Land of Goshen"; and, in 1801, it is said: "It appeared as though all the inhabitants of the place would soon be converted to God. Their minds were so much affected, that those who had been the most profligate ceased to persecute, and many of them began to pray." In Nottingham, too, "In every meeting, conviction seized men and women of all ranks and descriptions; and many cried aloud for mercy, and found peace through a crucified Saviour."[1] From the nature of the case, what are called revivals can but be occasional; they are breaks of glorious sunshine in a dark and cloudy day, they must so far be of an exceptional order. Hence we find them—to change the figure—not like perennial streams, flowing by, but like geyser springs throwing up waters from a mysterious source. We pass over some years, and then find "the work of grace in the salvation of men" peculiarly apparent at Bath in 1812. Close to it in time, but distant in locality, another and more extraordinary instance occurred at Redruth, in Cornwall, where Methodism wrought signal wonders. After a sermon, "multitudes began to cry earnestly for mercy"; and many, finding peace with God, mingled songs of praise with cries for mercy. Services were prolonged till midnight; and on one occasion it was two o'clock in the morning before the crowd could be induced to leave the chapel.[2] The author who gives this description says that at the moment of writing it he had by his side a pious

[1] Smith's *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, vol. ii. pp. 358–9.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 553.

miner who had been converted in those "times of refreshing." This was in 1814. Again, after a lapse of nearly ten years, several circuits were visited with a similar joy. At Cleckheaton, 120 persons were admitted on trial; at Bury, Lancashire, just after Christmas, about fifty "found peace"; and "similar manifestations of grace were experienced at Wirksworth, in the Cromford circuit."[1] This was in 1822, and in 1823 Cornwall is once more marked; it is said that within a few weeks more than 2,000 persons were converted. At Sowerby Bridge there was an addition of 156; at Northwich of 300.[2] These are all characteristic incidents.

Intelligent Methodists recognise gracious influences in ancient times, and even in classic regions; and they ask: "Who that believes the explicit teaching of Scripture respecting the goodness and mercy of God, and the prevalent influence of His Holy Spirit, can read the results which followed the teaching of Pythagoras in Croton, without recognising the powerful operation of His saving power to enlighten the minds and reform the lives even of heathen peoples?"[3] But the author who suggests this question—to some minds perhaps rather startling, and not to be expected from such a quarter—considers that revivals are generally connected with faithful preaching, and are effusions of Divine grace, only differing from ordinary operations by wider prevalence and greater intensity. At the same time he deplores the

[1] *Smith*, vol. iii. p. 65. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 72.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 616.

occurrence of manifest improprieties in connection with these awakenings through rashness and inconsideration. These evils were discerned and rebuked at an early period by men who plainly said, in an official address: "Nor can we approve of the noise and rant which have been encouraged by those persons in their religious exercises, because we conceive them to be inconsistent with that reverence which ought to be felt by every one who approaches the Majesty of Heaven."[1] I must add that other things, noticed in records of revivals—such as holding late meetings, and prolonging them throughout the night, encouraging people, even servants, to leave homes at unseasonable hours—appear highly objectionable, and were so regarded by judicious friends at the time they occurred.

To judge of revivals a large amount of information is necessary in reference both to antecedents and consequences; nor can we safely dispense, in forming an opinion, with a deep knowledge of the laws of human nature, physical, mental, and moral. Other excitements besides those called "evangelical" have to be examined. Outbursts of feeling beyond the precincts of what we look upon to be "the true Church" should be compared with those witnessed within. Facts need to be set down side by side, and resemblances and differences must be carefully ticked off. What is mere feeling, with no quality of real goodness in it, ought to be thrown out, and only genuine results can be attributed to truth and the

[1] *Life of Dr. Bunting*, by his son, Percival Bunting, p. 437.

Spirit of God. I see some things good mixed up with alarms in Lombardy before the Reformation, when pilgrims went from Lucca to Florence, and, forsaking politics and trade, crowded the marble churches. "During the two months that this devotion lasted, war was never thought of," so we read; pity that, it is added, "no sooner had it passed away than the people resumed their arms, and the previous agitation was renewed." The evanescent Italian improvement typifies what has often occurred in our own country. Moreover, fear in both cases has been a strong factor; but then, it must not be forgotten that terror, though no substitute for religion, may lead to what is better than itself. Exceptionable methods of impression are common in every time of extraordinary excitement. One-sided views are tempting—pardon, acceptance, peace are apt to be described as of the highest importance; but the moral side of religion, that which consists in spiritual goodness, in moral conduct, is in danger of being forgotten amidst the perturbations of a great awakening. When souls are shaken by alarming appeals, and cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" preachers and hearers are too likely to think more of comfort than of Christ-like living. There is risk of falling into the notion that the gospel is meant mainly to soothe the feelings, whilst really its highest aim is to make man good,—"perfect," as Jesus said, even as our "Father in heaven is perfect." It should not be forgotten here that Wesleyans taught a doctrine of perfection.

Missions come next to revivals in Methodist history; they surpass them in grandeur. They

might be said to be born with Methodism, for Wesley said, "the world is my parish"; and, as early as 1786, Dr. Coke planned a scheme of operation corresponding with it. In 1790 he was chairman of a committee to take in charge "missions established by the Methodist Society"; and these facts demonstrate that such activity was going on years before the establishment of what is called "The Wesleyan Missionary Society."

Coke was to the day of his death the life and soul of Methodist missions. He was an extraordinary man. "I wish," says Wilberforce, "I could forget his little round face and figure. Any one who wished to take off a Methodist, could not have done better than exactly copy his manner and appearance. He looked a mere boy when he was turned fifty, with such a smooth apple face, and little round mouth, that if it had been forgotten, you might have made as good a one by thrusting in your thumb. He was waiting once to see me in a room, into which some accident brought Banks. The doctor made, I suppose, some strange demonstration, for he sent Banks to Milner's room, saying in amazement, 'What extraordinary people Wilberforce does get round him!'" Now it so happens that I distinctly remember Dr. Coke having, when I was a little boy, visited my grandfather. A great number of Methodists had been invited to meet him, and as the room was large and the doctor small, he mounted a table, the better to be seen and heard. I can confirm what Wilberforce says of Coke's boyish appearance, and of the roundness of his face and figure; but there is a dash of caricature in the description, and the image in my memory is chiefly that of

a pleasant, cheerful looking man, with dark hair, and a lively way of speaking. That he was eccentric, and in some respects injudicious, with a touch of vanity, must be admitted; but that he had a soul burning with love for the salvation of other souls, is clear as day, and that is a set-off against many imperfections. He repeatedly crossed the sea to America and the West Indies, and he was on his way to India in 1814, when one morning his companions and the ship's crew were startled by the news, "Dr. Coke is dead!" So effective had been his plans and efforts, that in the year 1800 there were thirty missionaries, and 13,667 members in the West Indies and British America.

Coke worked especially hard during the last fourteen years of his life, and soon counted forty-three missionaries instead of thirty. But the times were inauspicious: war reigned between England and France; the West Indies were invaded, Christian ministers were thwarted; colonial governors were intolerant; chapels were shut up, meetings were forbidden, and societies were scattered. Terrible news came over from time to time, and the Report in 1810 stated the number of members had been reduced from 13,669 to 13,630. Before Coke's death a great change came over the mission economy of Methodism. He had been the presiding genius, but he had not conducted business on any carefully arranged plan. Committees had been appointed; annual collections had been made; but the funds had depended mainly upon the begging excursions of the indefatigable advocate. He was so general a favourite that nobody thought of removing him from the helm,

yet it was felt that some systematic method of steering the ship ought to be commenced. His contemplated plan for India made the obligation more urgent; and, after his death, the need of united action and responsibility pressed irresistibly on the connexional chiefs. Moreover, enthusiasm burnt much more brightly in the bosoms of certain prominent men than on the altars and hearths of Methodists at large. The latter needed stimulus and direction—stimulus to liberality, direction in the employment of resources. Methodism, in its grand aggressive enterprise, had reached a crisis. The hour called, not for a *man* only, but for *men*, and men were forthcoming when the clock struck.

Amongst others, two appeared, in themselves a host: Richard Watson and Jabez Bunting are names emblazoned in gold on Methodist banners.

Richard Watson—tall, thin, yet strongly built, with a massive forehead, an intellectual face, a pale countenance, a piercing eye, a careworn expression, and a majestic mien—came forward to meet the emergency. His antecedents had been peculiar, for he had left the Wesleyans, soon after joining them, only to return with augmented decision and devotedness. "In council," it is said by one who knew him, "he pronounced, and that generally with great wisdom, much oftener than he attempted to discuss; nor was it always obvious whether he conveyed the results of a judgment exercised and matured by close study of the question, or prompted by the necessities of the occasion only. His heart was full of sympathies, but perhaps they were with ideas and things rather than

with men ; for his was a proud spirit, and had been bruised at the time when it could hardly bear any touch but that of Him who made it. Yet how vivid is the recollection of that lip, now curling with scorn, and now quickly composed into placidity, and now relaxing into a heavenly smile."[1] My own limited knowledge of Mr. Watson leads me to think of him as "like a star that dwelt apart," one inspiring more of reverence than affection, one born to lead the way rather than to follow others in paths of perplexity.

Methodist missions were attacked in Parliament, and defended by him with marked ability. The West Indies were the point for assault, and the defender proved that, by missionary effort, thousands of the negroes had been raised to a character of purity, loyalty, and happiness, enduring the evils of slavery with a glad heart and free, "enjoying the blessings of Christianity both in life and in death."[2] The negroes' cause he enthusiastically espoused. In 1824, when preaching in City Road Chapel, he exclaimed, "Is Africa without her heraldry of science and of fame? The only probable account which can be given of the negro tribes is, that, as Africa was peopled through Egypt by three of the descendants of Ham, they are the offspring of Cush, Mizraim, and Phut. They found Egypt a morass, and converted it into the most fertile country of the world ; they reared its pyramids, invented its hieroglyphics, gave letters to Greece and Rome, and through them to us. The

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[1] *Life of Dr. Bunting*, p. 379.

[2] *A Defence of the Wesleyan Missions in the West Indies.*

everlasting architecture of Africa still exists, the wonder of the world, though in ruins. Her mighty kingdoms have yet their record in history. She has poured forth her heroes on the field, given bishops to the Church and martyrs to the fires; and for negro physiognomy, as though that should shut out the light of intellect, go to your national museum; contemplate the features of the colossal head of Memnon, and the statues of the divinities on which the ancient Africans impressed their own forms, and there see, in close resemblance to the negro feature, the mould of those countenances which once beheld as the creations of their own immortal genius the noblest and most stupendous monuments of human skill, and taste, and grandeur. In the imperishable porphyry and granite is the unfounded and pitiful slander publicly, and before all the world, refuted. There we see the negro under cultivation."

This was not commonplace oratory.

By the side of Watson stood Bunting, a different man—stout, inclined to corpulency, with a full face, double chin, benignant countenance, and a voice which could be pathetic or commanding, as occasion required. If he had not the power of abstract thought possessed by his friend, he had far more of practical skill; and if anywhere fell John Wesley's mantle of conscious and acknowledged authority, it was on Bunting's shoulders. He certainly became, as years advanced, lord of the ascendant, and therefore could be no favourite with restive spirits. He had in him the elements of a great churchman, and in any ecclesiastical community would have been sure

to reach the foremost place; not so much from his own ambition, as from concession on the part of supporters, and from the uselessness of resistance on the part of opponents. He does not stand, even now sufficiently far back in the perspective of history to receive the impartial judgment of survivors, who were involved with him, on one side or the other, in connexional strifes.

He rendered essential service by the organization of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. That society is often misapprehended. It was not, as already appears on these pages, the origin of missionary efforts. It did not, like the Baptist and London Missionary Societies, begin to send messengers to the heathen—they had been sent before. It rather took the place of an organization for supporting and directing men already in the field. Jabez Bunting in 1813, at Leeds, where he was stationed, resolved, in concert with his brethren, to initiate an association for that district; and it commenced with a public meeting, which, strange as it may appear to modern Methodists, was opposed as an unauthorized innovation—"carnal," "worldly," and the like; even more, it was counted "a device of the devil." Another important step is seen in a series of resolutions (1815) for the future management of missions; and in the establishment of a committee, with treasurers and secretaries to act accordingly. The field of operation was enlarged. France, Gibraltar, Sierra Leone, the Cape of Good Hope, and Ceylon were marked on the missionary map. Hopes brightened. The report for 1815 was more cheer-

ing than any one before. A finishing touch soon followed. "The Conference of 1817, having accepted a series of resolutions submitted to it by the missionary committee, recorded its approbation of a scheme which was placed on these minutes as a 'Plan of a General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society'; and requested the executive committee to make such additional arrangements as might be found necessary for perfecting it, and carrying it into full effect. The completed document was adopted by the Conference of 1818, as 'Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.' These, with some additions and modifications, have remained the established constitution of the association."[1]

Missions prospered. Reports from year to year showed an increase in funds, agents, and members. In 1828 there were one hundred and thirty-eight stations, one hundred and ninety missionaries, exclusive of catechists and schoolmasters, 36,917 persons in church fellowship. A furious persecution broke out in the West Indies. A mob pulled down a chapel in Jamaica. A young man, for preaching the gospel, was thrown into prison, and there died. Another missionary, shut up in a filthy gaol, nearly suffered the same fate. But such malignant opposition, by evoking British sympathy with the sufferers, tended to the furtherance of the gospel. And as the missionary spirit increased, its reflex operation was manifest at home. Old prejudice against foreign missions, as diverting attention from

[1] *Smith*, vol. iii. p. 27.

our own country, gradually decreased; the prosperity of the Church rose in proportion to the flow of the missionary tide. As I once heard a Calcutta clergyman say, Spiritual life in England is advanced by activity in spreading the gospel, as the Indian lotus flower mounts higher and higher on the bosom of the swelling river.

Methodism, as a whole, was in a better condition at the end than at the beginning of the thirty years. But it had its troubles. Judiciously contrived as was its complicated machinery, "wheels within wheels," some parts now and then would get out of gear; and, curiously enough, during the period before us, the most remarkable interruptions of peace arose from the sons and daughters of harmony. Church choirs have often proved unmanageable. Early in the century the Conference found it necessary to curb musical caprices. Instruments were prohibited, with the exception of "a bass viol," which was allowed to accompany the leader's voice. All hymns not published by the Book Room were forbidden. Pieces, recitations, solos, fugues, were not permitted, nor musical festivals. Singing was "to raise the soul to God only." Very peremptory is the law: "Let no preacher suffer his right to conduct every part of the worship of Almighty God to be infringed on, either by singers or others; but let him sacredly preserve and calmly maintain his authority, as he who sacrifices this, sacrifices not only Methodism but the spirit and design of Christianity."[1] One sees

[1] *Smith*, vol. ii. p. 413.

in a moment at the back of all this—first, restless innovation on the part of choirs, and a vigorous determination to have their own way in music matters; and secondly, a strong resolve on the part of preachers to check such wilfulness. It happened that the year 1804 was visited by a trouble of the kind now indicated. At some place unnamed, the tunes chosen were such as the congregation could not sing. "The cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music,"—sounds not incompatible with a ceremonial religion and harmonizing well with the worship of "a golden image,"—were in this instance statedly employed in distracting variety.[1] A second minister interfered, contrary to the injunction of his superintendent. Then ensued disturbances for months, and great scandals in the neighbourhood. Trustees and preachers came into collision; but the fire was put out at last, and the smoke was blown away.

We meet with a graver business in the organ question at Leeds in 1827. The Methodist law was that organs could not be erected without permission from Conference; and in 1808 it was judged expedient to refuse, after that year, a sanction for introducing such an instrument into any of the chapels. Notwithstanding this resolve, consent of Conference was obtained in 1820 for an organ in Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool. Trustees at Leeds asked for a similar concession. A number of Methodists there disapproved of the request. They considered that

[1] *Life of Bunting*, p. 251.

organs were detrimental to spirituality. Exciting speeches were delivered on the subject. Some local preachers and class leaders headed the opposition, and Sunday-school teachers, previously out of sympathy with the ruling powers, threw their weight into the scale. Anybody who takes the trouble to look into this extinct volcano, will see that, however it might have been at first, the organ agitation long before the end reached something lying far below the surface. Opponents embodied that democratic element pointed out as seminally existing soon after Wesley's death. They set up circuit or district rule against Conference rule. Their movement, whether first intended so or not, pointed in the direction of Independency. They would, as if they had belonged to a Congregational church, resolve this problem for themselves and not commit it to conferential decision. The organ was only a straw on the top of the waters. Trustees persevered in their application to Conference, and Conference granted what was asked. The agitation then took a new form. A large number of people seceded; and a net decrease of society in the following year amounted to above one thousand. The constitutional principles of Methodism were involved in such an affair.

It shows little knowledge of human nature and of the connexion between conduct and opinions to be astonished at such an outbreak, exclaiming, "How great a matter a little fire kindleth!" In this instance the democratic and oligarchical principles came into collision, whilst both parties professed loyalty to the original constitution of the ecclesiastical state.

On whichever side reason and Scripture might be judged to go in the controversy, the historical or constitutional argument, it seems to me, was in favour of Conference.[1] Conference from the beginning had claimed supremacy ; right or wrong, that supremacy seemed essential to the existence of Methodism. This question will come up again and again before I have finished my task.

To turn to a peaceful subject. Methodism from the beginning had a literature of its own.[2] Wesley's works and *The Arminian Magazine* were valued and read by pastors and people. Five years after the opening of the century, a new series of the periodical appeared under the title of *The Methodist Magazine*, and it ran its course for half a century. It presented biography, divinity, defences of truth, illustrations of nature, and facts of providence. The volumes look old-fashioned now, but they abound in striking sketches of Methodist experience, expositions of evangelical principles, Christian evidences, scientific essays, and interesting anecdotes. Joseph Benson was editor —a thin, patriarchal-looking man, dressed in a long coat of deep purple tint, as I recollect him several years after he became editor. He had been tutor in Lady Huntingdon's college at Trevecca, and a friend of the seraphic Fletcher of Madeley, whose Life he afterwards wrote.

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[1] My personal sympathies, of course, are in favour of much more local liberty and independence than Methodism allows.

[2] My honoured friend, Dr. Osborne, with wonderful painstaking, has compiled *Outlines of Wesleyan Bibliography* (1869).

Benson had received his education at Oxford, and been welcomed to the Methodist ministry by the Founder himself. He was a good scholar, and a well-informed divine, and in after years, when a commentary on the Scriptures was desired, he undertook to supply the deficiency. What preceded it is worth a passing notice. Coke had published a commentary, begun in 1800 and finished in 1803, but it was made up of materials not collected by himself. The story of the work belongs to the curiosities of literature. The daughter of Dr. Cudworth married Sir Francis Masham, a friend of John Locke. A bundle of papers was discovered after his death and sold to a bookseller in Piccadilly. He set them down as autographic notes by the great philosopher on different parts of Scripture. It turned out afterwards that he had nothing to do with them. About the time when the bookseller acquired these MSS., he obtained also more comments in the handwriting of Dr. Waterland. Here was capital for a literary enterprise, but who was to put together and edit the fragments? The bookseller wanted a popular name for business of that sort. Dr. Dodd was then an immense favourite with the public, so his name appeared on the title-page. The book came out with much *éclat*; but after the editor's execution for forgery, of course his reputation and that of the volume expired. Coke got hold of the obscure volumes, and made abundant use of the contents in his own commentary, without any acknowledgment, for which omission he was justly censured. Whatever its merits or demerits, it certainly was thrown into the shade by the production of Joseph

Benson, which is praised by Hartwell Horne, in his *Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, and still holds, I believe, a respectable place in the estimation of Wesleyan Methodists. Benson rendered other literary services in *A Defence of the Methodists*, *A Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, and numerous sermons published after his death.

He was distinguished as a preacher. "He seems like a messenger sent from the other world to call men to account," said Richard Cecil. "Always," adds another, "clear, solemn, convincing, and often heated into a vehement passion of power," he stood before his people" early in the century, "from Sabbath to Sabbath, a pale and slender man, of a presence melancholy and all but mean, with a voice feeble and, as he raised it, shrill, with a strange accent caught in his native Cumberland; his body bending as beneath the burden of the Lord, his gesture uncouth, and sometimes grotesque; the general impression of the whole scarcely redeemed, at first sight, by the high clear forehead, firm nose, and steady eye which his portraits have preserved to posterity."[1] His ministry before 1800 was wonderfully awakening, and continued to be so for many years afterwards. Jabez Bunting used to call Joseph Benson his spiritual father.

For various learning, Dr. Adam Clarke surpassed his contemporary. He had an omnivorous literary appetite, but his digestive power was weak. His memory exceeded his judgment. His great com-

[1] *Life of Bunting*, pp. 31–34.

mentary, which in fame has eclipsed that of Benson, contains a mass of diversified knowledge with some independent criticism. His speculations respecting what in our version is called "the serpent," and his identification of it with the monkey, excited plenty of derision; and his emphatic denial of the eternal Sonship of our Lord incurred the condemnation of orthodox divines—amongst them was Richard Watson—his adoption of Dr. Taylor's *Key to the Romans*, if it won praise from some, incurred the censure of others; and his anti-Calvinism displeased the Church Evangelicals. Clarke was more than a commentator, he was a laborious compiler and editor. His *Bibliographical Dictionary* and some other works are proofs of diligence in the first capacity; his edition of Rymer's *Federa*, which he did not finish, is an evidence of labour in the second. But he attempted too much to be sufficiently thorough in his undertakings, and could hardly run the gauntlet of criticism in the present day. He was "a Methodist preacher" in the special signification of the term. Though flattered by the great, he was never ashamed of his religion, and in the plainest way enforced Wesleyan doctrines. In the only sermon of his I ever heard—one which he preached on behalf of the Royal Humane Society,—he gave a detailed account of his being drowned and afterwards restored. "I felt no pain," he said; "I was submerged, and at once a kind of representation, nearly of a green colour, presented itself; multitudes of objects were in it, not any of them, however, possessing any kind of likeness to anything I had seen before. The first sensation when I came to life,

was as if a spear had been run through my heart. How long I was submerged it would be impossible to say"—perhaps not so long as the preacher imagined. The anecdote produced an amazing effect, increased by his appearance, his voice, and his extensive reputation.

Clarke had successors in his Biblical department. Joseph Sutcliffe, at a considerable distance in point of erudition as well as time, published a *Commentary on the Old and New Testament* in 1834, and Dr. Townley, earlier, issued *Illustrations of Biblical Literature.*

Richard Watson had not the learning of Adam Clarke, but intellectually he was far superior. He boldly controverted his friend's position respecting the eternal Sonship, and defended the orthodox doctrine. Clarke held that the term "Son of God" in Scripture pointed to our Lord's humanity. Watson contended that it meant His Divinity. The controversy produced unpleasant results in this respect, that different parties gathered round the two leaders, and helplessly plunged into deep waters where they could not swim. Watson, amongst other books, published a criticism on Southey's *Life of Wesley*, dealing severely with the Laureate; much too severely it will be admitted by some who have no sympathy at all with his ecclesiastical views. In some respects it was impossible for Southey to understand Wesley or Wesleyanism. He dwelt in a remote hemisphere, and could neither enter into the experiences nor appreciate the doctrines of the early revivalists. But Southey certainly felt a reverence for John Wesley,

and was fully competent to relate the facts of his life. This he did in his own charming style; though his critic finds room enough for fault-finding, he does not appear to the greatest advantage in this particular publication.

Watson's *Theological Institutes* are of far superior merit. He was profoundly thoughtful, and this quality is apparent in his discussions. He treats Christian evidence according to the position of the controversy sixty years ago; and it has not shifted so as to make what he says inapposite at the present time. His attitude in relation to doctrine, is that of an Evangelical Arminian, and the distinguishing tenets of Wesleyanism—such as adoption, the witness of the Spirit, and forgiveness of sin—he holds with a tenacious grasp. On the grand question of Divine sovereignty, and human free agency, he approaches nearer to modern Calvinism than other writers on his side; but there ever must be a thorough metaphysical division between the two schemes. Like a boundary river dividing two empires, it has been the scene of many a battle; but, as one grows old, the disposition to renew the wordy contest becomes less and less; delight in the common spiritual life which, thank God, the two parties alike possess, becomes more and more intense. The water, though very deep, is so narrow that they who occupy the opposite banks can reach across and shake hands. Watson's published sermons are unequal, some being little more than mere notes; but those prepared by him for the press are magnificent, especially one on West Indian Missions which I have mentioned already.

Henry Moore belonged to an earlier generation. He became a Methodist preacher several years before Wesley's death, and was one of his confidential friends and advisers. Thus he became a depositary of traditions respecting the founder; and carrying them down with him to a very old age,—for he lived long enough to preach a funeral sermon for Clarke in 1832,—he might well be looked up to as an oracle relative to Wesleyan history. In connexion with Moore, Coke undertook the task of writing Wesley's life, which was followed by a controversy not worth remembrance. Thirty-two years afterwards, Moore printed a life of both the brothers John and Charles, with an account of the work in which they were principal instruments. Like others we have named, Moore was a noted preacher. He had been a gay youth. "The parks," he says, "Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and especially the theatres, of which I was a passionate admirer, quite intoxicated me, so that the name of Garrick, in a playbill would make my heart vibrate with delightful anticipation." He was converted. The change was deep, manifest, lasting; and the experience of it under circumstances which—to use Paley's comparison—a man could no more forget than he could an escape from shipwreck, made him an impressive preacher of "the new birth." One who knew him mentions "the gravity and stateliness of his demeanour; his quiet humour, kindling sometimes into sparkling wit; his general force and weight of character, and Wesley's recorded confidence in his integrity and wisdom." He had crotchets, but they "did not become prominent until they had lost power

to hurt."[1] He cherished friendships outside the Methodist circle, and was specially intimate with Alexander Knox. Moore did not die until 1844, at the patriarchal age of ninety-three, and he was eighty-one when he preached Clarke's funeral sermon.

Moore, in early life, had been powerfully impressed by the preaching of Samuel Bradburn, a popular Methodist, between 1774 and 1814. At the latter date we find Bradburn taking a famous part in one of the missionary meetings at London, and, according to all accounts, he must have had great natural eloquence. He was self-possessed, conscious of his own abilities, indomitably courageous, and the master of his audience, however composed. But there was a fly in the pot of ointment. Witty, apt to look at the ludicrous side of things, naturally satirical, and sometimes suiting his utterances to the taste of the vulgar, he sadly impaired the effect of his ministry ; and, worse still, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. After occupying the presidential chair, he received censure at the bar of his brethren. Thoroughly penitent, he regained fraternal confidence, and for ten or twelve years afterwards retained influence in Methodist pulpits.

Another celebrity of later date was Robert Newton. At a Conference meeting within the first decade of this century, he was seen by Jabez Bunting as "a tall young man, whose person, singularly handsome, was rendered yet more attractive by the unusual costume in which he presented himself. The coat

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[1] *Life of Bunting.*

lacked the true canonical cut which forbade the appearance of an angle; and not a few must have contrasted the general plainness of their own habiliments with the yellow buckskins and light top-boots which the young preacher was the first and the last to exhibit in that grave assembly." He was "quite unconscious that the garb he usually wore in a circuit where the horse did only less service than his rider was at all peculiar."[1] A distinctive ministerial dress was not universal amongst Methodists in those days, and as itinerants spent much time on the road, it was not unnatural that they should, in some cases, wear at other times what was suitable enough when they were on horseback; but this curious instance must have been quite exceptional. I knew Dr. Newton in after years, and have heard him speak of the thousands of miles he travelled week by week in the coaching days —cogitating sermons on the wheels, as he used to say, and managing to get back on Saturday night to his own circuit, having spent six days in travelling over England and Ireland. His majestic appearance added to the force of his oratory. His deep bass voice filled large chapels, and in good Anglo-Saxon speech, and in well-contrived divisions, he told the gospel story so as to interest people of all descriptions. He was of a catholic spirit, and lived on good terms with different denominations; and I have heard Dean Hook, who knew him at Leeds, speak most respectfully of the man and his ministrations.

Between 1820 and 1830, Jabez Bunting, Richard

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[1] *Life of Bunting.*

Watson, and Robert Newton were the most influential members of the Connexion. Others may be mentioned with honour, but none attained to the position of the "first three." Watson was president only once (1826), for he died in the prime of life; Bunting and Newton, I believe, occupied the chair four times.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW CONNEXION, AND PRIMITIVE METHODISM.

1800-1830.

SECESSIONS from the old Methodist body occurred during this period, as hinted already. It can scarcely be wondered at, for this reason amongst others: that however irregular Methodism appeared to the clergy of England, however it might be condemned as a violation of ecclesiastical order, it was, in accordance with its name, the most methodical movement of modern times. It did not break out and continue its existence in spasmodic ways, and spasmodic agitations; it did not waste its strength in unconnected efforts, and exhibit individualism running to seed; for under its founder's inspiration it took orderly shape, compressed itself within definite limits, mapped down its boundaries, built its walls, raised its towers, constructed its gates, let people in according to fixed rules, and by the same rules turned them out if they were disobedient. It allowed little freedom of action except in personal efforts, according to fundamental principles. Whether it could have become the power it is, had it proceeded otherwise, it is not my province to decide. I only state the fact, adding

that such strictness at first sight might seem to imperil its early career; that it did really occasion division is plain enough. The free spirit of revivalism became restive under legal control; enthusiasts complained of prison-like restraints, subordination was not to their taste, they wanted liberty of action, they wished to do what they pleased; hence, as rules which they could not endure were inflexibly maintained, expulsion or voluntary departure followed as an obvious consequence.

The most important secessions were those which created the New Connexion and the Primitive Methodist body. The first of these arose out of a controversy between Alexander Kilham and the Conference. I noticed this in a former volume, and I may here mention as a remarkable coincidence that Kilham, like Wesley, was a native of Epworth; and a visitor to that interesting Lincolnshire town, inquisitive about the founder of Methodism, may, perchance, as in my own case, be directed to some spot connected with Kilham, instead of the Rectory and market-place connected with Wesley.

The New Connexion was formed in 1797. It originated in the first grand dispute as to the constitution and laws of the Methodist body. The two points on which the dispute turned were the relation in which Methodism stood to the Church of England, and the elements of which the governing power of Methodism should consist. Wesley had always been indisposed to sever himself from the Establishment, He wished his people to be satisfied with lay preachers, and to repair to the parish altar and

font for the sacraments. A large number, after his death, wished to maintain the old tie. A vigorous party wished to snap it, and to come out decided Dissenters. This controversy continued until the general sense of the body showed itself in favour of sacraments being administered by Methodist preachers. The disturbance, though serious at first, came to an end by the decision which accorded to preachers such sacred functions as belonged to clergymen of other communities. But the agitation as to government was not temporary. It broke out again and again, and that which occurred in 1797 was of the same order with what followed in later years.

Alexander Kilham is generally esteemed *the* founder of the New Connexion, but in that light he is not represented by the leaders of the body in the present day. They claim simply to stand on ecclesiastical principles which he avowed. There were personalities, and very unpleasant ones, associated with the part he took as a reformer; and his representatives are careful to separate those personalities from the principles which they hold. But if Kilham was not personal founder, certainly he took a leading part in the establishment of a new denomination.

He was a much more decided Dissenter than many of his brethren. He must have been out of sympathy with them, much as he loved Methodism. His own system was an ideal one, an improvement, some may think, upon that actually in existence. But to change the actual according to his ideal, involved a revolution for which many were not prepared. Right or wrong, that is the fact. He was young, able, and pious, but

he was enthusiastic, impatient, and apt to speak and write when it would have been better to hold his tongue and leave his pen in the inkstand. Yet every one who reads his story, whether told by the elder or younger body, must respect his motives whilst they impeach his wisdom. He was expelled from the Conference on account of personalities alleged against him; and, after his expulsion, he attempted to keep up an agitation amongst those from whom he was separated. He looked on Conference as a despotic tribunal, and at first advised dissatisfied Methodists not to secede, but to bring the government to its senses by the parliamentary expedient of stopping supplies.[1] His suggestion was not adopted. A secession took place; but it was limited in number. Only seven preachers appear on the list of "the New Itinerancy," as it is called; and Alexander Kilham stands first. "Very few if any popular preachers are come out to our help,"[2] is the simple-hearted lament. But Kilham, according to all accounts, was popular, and William Thorn, who stood second, seems to have been a man of respectable attainments. Both were evidently warm-hearted. The rest were beloved by those they led. It is affecting to find that Kilham lived little more than a year after the rupture.

The principles on which the New Connexion was established are as follows :—

"1. The right of the people to hold their public

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[1] This was proposed in his "address," published just after his expulsion.

[2] *Jubilee Volume of the New Connexion*, p. 113.

religious worship at such hours as were most convenient, without their being restricted to the mere intervals of the hours appointed for service in the Established Church.

"2. The right of the people to receive the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper from the hands of their own ministers, and in their own places of worship.

"3. The right of the people to a representation in the district meetings, and in the annual Conference, and thereby to participate in the government of the community and in the appropriation of its funds.

"4. The right of the Church to have a voice, through its business meetings, in the reception and expulsion of members, the choice of local officers, and in the calling out of candidates for the ministry."[1]

The New Connexion retained the anti-Calvinistic doctrines of Wesleyanism, also the peculiarity of its teaching on the subject of the Spirit's witness, and sanctification of believers. In the main, too, it transferred to itself the organization of early Methodism. It established an annual conference with this peculiarity, that the object earnestly sought in previous agitations was now attained, a strong lay element being incorporated. Conference was to be composed of an *equal* number of preachers and laymen, each circuit sending one representative of each class. So constituted it was to be the supreme legislative and ruling authority. District meetings, composed of two elements, as in the case of Conference, were to be

[1] *Jubilee Volume*, p. 56.

regularly held for the despatch of business. Quarterly meetings were included in the constitution, and these were to embrace circuit preachers, circuit stewards, and representatives elected by the people. Classes were to continue, as under the old *regime*; and meetings of those who were "Leaders" of the classes were to be held weekly or once a fortnight. But no provision was made for the exercise of congregational power such as belongs to Independent Churches. How could it, without unmethodising Methodism? Whatever may have been done at first to unsettle the minds of people they had left, afterwards a pacific manifesto was issued; and the rupture, though painful on both sides, did not diminish the sum total of members in the Old Connexion. It reported in 1796, the year of Kilham's expulsion, 95,226; in 1797, 99,519; in 1798, when the New Connexion held its first Conference, 101,682.

Richard Watson, in 1797, when only sixteen years and six months old, was then practically though not formally admitted as a probationer in the New Connexion; he appears on the preachers' list the following year. He was a youth of extraordinary abilities, and, considering his limited advantages, he made a surprising advance in study. But he was speculative, and not always wise in expressing his opinions; consequently reports got abroad unfavourable to his orthodoxy—reports which he flatly denied. Some ignorant and narrow people treated him shamefully; this he could not bear, and consequently he seceded. Apparently without going into ecclesiastical questions, he had joined the New Connexion

because it afforded him opportunities of usefulness. Some of his published sermons were delivered while he remained in the younger communion, and they must have contributed greatly to its power and reputation.

The New Connexion made slow progress. In 1803, six years after its commencement, it numbered only 5,280 members; and in 1813 it did not amount to more than 8,067. But looking at the difficulties it had to overcome, the authors of the *Jubilee Volume* find cause for thankfulness and encouragement. Whatever might be thought of the men who led this band of volunteers, nobody could suspect them of mercenary motives. No imputation of regard for "the loaves and the fishes" could for a moment rest on any of them. The statement of finances is too curious to pass over.

"A settlement of the salaries of the preachers was effected. Serious complaints had been made respecting the inadequacy of the income of the preachers to meet their necessities, and a committee had been appointed by the previous Conference to examine and report thereon. After a candid consideration of the subject, it was cordially resolved, that in addition to the use of a house and furniture, at the expense of the circuit, every married preacher in full connection should receive for himself and wife twelve pounds per quarter; '*not less* than two pounds per quarter for a servant,' and in addition to these items 'not less than fourteen shillings per week for board.' The allowance from the Paternal Fund, for boys under eight years of age, and for girls under twelve, to be six pounds per annum. Bills for medical attendance

and travelling expenses, to be paid by the quarterly meeting."[1]

Disputes arose between the two Connexions respecting property. Methodist chapels were held in trust for ministers whom the Conference might appoint. When the disruption took place, in some cases chapel trustees in sympathy with the new movement, and supported by a large body of members, claimed the right of retaining buildings for the use of preachers who adopted the reformed system. These trustees, together with the congregations, came into collision with the Conference, which claimed the buildings for the original body. Consequences arose such as might be anticipated, but it is surprising to find that contentions unhappily prolonged themselves down to the year 1814. A congregation at Huddersfield was then forcibly dispossessed of a building in which they had been worshipping ever since 1797. As by law these chapels were subject to the control of the Wesleyan Conference, the retention of them by the New Connexion was deemed illegal, but of course the people, so long accustomed to worship in them, felt the hardship of being ejected; and, unfortunately, proposals by them to refer the matter to arbitration were declined by the legally constituted owners of the property. This is to be lamented. But the Connexion did not fail to erect edifices of its own. One of these affords a good example of progress made in the course of years. Hanley, in the potteries, was a stronghold. First the people

[1] *Jubilee of the Methodist Connexion*, p. 312.

assembled in a coach-house. This, as early as 1798, was exchanged for an edifice named Bethesda, capable of accommodating six hundred people, and to that house of mercy the builders added more than five porches, in the subordinate societies they constructed all round it. The building became too small in 1812, when it was enlarged so as to hold a thousand hearers. It was filled, more room was wanted; and at length, in 1820, a sort of New Connexion Cathedral was opened, spacious enough to receive more than 2,500 worshippers. Progress appears in other forms. A Home Mission was established in 1818, and relinquished in 1824, in order to break up new ground in Ireland; in 1828, the Irish Mission became "the Methodist New Connexion in Ireland," having its own institutions, and holding its own conference, but still receiving a superintendent from England. The English helped the Irish in their funds, and the Irish sent over a representation to the English Conference. The ten years between 1823 and 1833 showed an increase of 3,990 members.

Another offshoot from Methodism occurred in the year 1815. A Wesleyan local preacher in the West of England, named Bryan, broke away from the body to which he belonged, and travelled about, preaching wherever he chose. Succeeding in itinerant labours, he formed societies known by the name of Bible Christians. This led to a separation from the Wesleyans. In a few years he called together a small conference, and his followers were arranged in twelve circuits. Bryan evinced a determination

to rule without respect to the decisions of Conference; but his attempts to reign alone were successfully resisted, and this led to his retirement. The Conference consisted of preachers and laymen in unequal proportions, except that, once in five years, the district meetings were to send as many lay representatives as would be equal to the ministers who might be present. Mr. Bryan retired from the Connexion he had established.

Primitive Methodists, a much more important body, had a different origin. There lived in Staffordshire, at the beginning of the century, two good men, named Hugh Bourne and William Clowes. The first belonged to Stoke-upon-Trent, the second to Burslem; they were in humble circumstances, though the latter was related to the Wedgwood family. Bourne, a plain, steady young man, lived in his father's house at Norton-in-the-Moors, amidst coal mines and ironworks, when a sermon by John Wesley, and the reading of one of Fletcher's books, gave a new turn to his thoughts respecting religion. Clowes was brought up in the pottery line under his uncle, Joseph Wedgwood, and being superior to his comrades, he earned money which he spent in "riotous living." Notoriously dissipated, he ran away, and was near being kidnapped; but attending a prayer meeting after his marriage, he felt convictions which ended in his becoming a decided Christian.

The two men joined the Methodists, and soon caught the spirit of revivalism. Bourne began to preach, and Clowes followed his example, each

stimulating the other in the pursuit of higher godliness. They read about American camp meetings; and this firing their zeal anew, they resolved to seek such spiritual enjoyments amidst the bleak hills of their own neighbourhood. Their imaginations became filled with pictures of forest trees hung with lamps, a wide space encircled by tents, and a preacher addressing thousands of people, called together day after day at the sound of a trumpet.[1]

Cop Mow or Congleton Edge is an elevation of millstone grit dividing Staffordshire from Cheshire. It has no beauty, no charms like rich woods on the other side of the Atlantic powdered over with numerous lights. The land is poor, the country unprepossessing; but under the shadow of the hill a wonderful camp meeting was held, long to be remembered. It had better be described in Bourne's own words:—

"Mow camp meeting was held on Sunday, May 31st, 1807. The morning proved unfavourable; but about six o'clock the Lord sent the clouds off, and gave us a very pleasant day. The meeting was opened by two holy men from Runtsford, Captain Anderson having previously erected a flag on the mountain to direct strangers; and these three, with some pious people from Macclesfield, carried on the meeting a considerable time in a most vigorous and lively manner. The congregation rapidly increased, and others began to join in the holy exercises. The wind was cold, but a large grove of fir-trees kept it off; and another preaching stand was erected in a distant part of the field, under cover of a stone wall. Returning [from the second stand] I met [with] a company at a distance from the first

[1] See *Narrative of a Mission to Nova Scotia*, etc.

stand, praying with a man in distress. I could not get near; but I there found such a degree of joy and love, that it was beyond description. I should gladly have stopped there, but other matters called me away. I perceived that the Lord was beginning to work mightily. Nearer the first stand was another company, praying with mourners. Immediately the man in the former company was praising God, and I found that he had obtained the pardon of his sins. Many were afterwards converted in the other company. Meanwhile, preaching went on without intermission at both stands, and about noon the congregation was so much increased that we were obliged to erect a third preaching stand. We fixed it at a distance below the first, by the side of the fir-tree grove. I got upon this stand after the first preaching, and was extremely surprised at the amazing sight that appeared before me. The people were nearly all under my eye; and I had not before conceived that such a vast multitude was present. Thousands hearing with attention as solemn as death, presented a scene of the most sublime and awfully pleasing grandeur that my eyes ever beheld. The preachers seemed to be fired with uncommon zeal, and an extraordinary unction attended their word, while tears were flowing and sinners trembling on every side. Numbers [of them] were convinced, and saints were uncommonly quickened."

Other meetings followed. The excitement spread, and Staffordshire folks thought the world was being turned upside-down. Methodist preachers thereabout did not approve of what went on, and by handbills disclaimed any connection with the proceedings. Conference took the matter up, and in 1807 passed the following minute: "It is our judgment that, even supposing such meetings to be allowed in America, they are highly improper in

England, and likely to be productive of considerable mischief, and we disclaim all connection with them." This alarmed a number of steady members, but did not check the course of Hugh Bourne. He persisted in holding his meetings, not without sympathisers, though the number diminished after the publication of the Conference rule. Bourne was expelled from Society in June, 1808, not for irreligion, not for immorality, but for violating Methodist law. The Conference had come to a conclusion, and the quarterly meeting of the Circuit exercised discipline accordingly. The expelled member looked on himself as hardly used, and many friends agreed with him. He went on preaching and holding meetings, and in all this Clowes was his companion. A further step was taken. The two men instituted a Society of ten members, and met in class, thus breaking off from the parent stem. After this had taken place, Clowes' name no more appeared in the Methodist plan; he went on preaching, however, and then the quarterly ticket of membership was withheld. Such a man could not be silent, and hence came the formation of a new religious society, holding to the camp meeting and open air principle. A general gathering followed in the month of July, 1811. Funds were collected, two travelling preachers were authorized, and the name of a circuit steward appeared in the humble official list. The members did not amount to more than two hundred. They built a chapel, and determined to call themselves *Primitive Methodists*. They formed a Home Mission. The agents were miserably paid; privations had to be endured; more-

over they lacked the prestige derived from a founder like him of Lincoln College. They had not one man of learning in their ranks. The world despised them, and when it heard them sing and preach, certainly not with gentle voices it called them *Ranters*.

Their own historian relates their progress :—

"The first annual meeting or conference of the Connexion was held at Hull in May, 1820. The statistics of the community were reported as follows: 8 circuits, 48 travelling preachers, 277 local preachers, 7,842 members of society. The number of members had not been taken before since July 26th, 1811, when the number was estimated at 200. From these numbers it appears that the progress of the community for several years was but slow. Of the 7,842 members reported to this conference, there is reason to believe that about half had been added during the preceding year; for 1,000 had been added in Tunstall circuit, 800 or 900 in Hull circuit, and it is probable that Nottingham and Loughborough circuits had realized a proportionate increase. The causes of this slow progress were probably various. The fearful struggle in which the nation was engaged with France during the early portion of the Connexion's history, would prove some hindrance to the progress of evangelical religion, for a fierce warlike spirit is at utter variance with the benevolent spirit of the gospel. The temporal distress and political agitation which followed the termination of the war would also throw obstacles in the way of a new and feeble community."[1]

Another report may now be taken. At the conference of 1824, 33,507 members were on the books; in 1825 there were 33,582; in 1828, 31,610. "The

[1] Petty's *Primitive Methodist Connexion.*

extension and increase of the Connexion had been amazingly rapid. Societies arose in quick succession in most parts of England, and speedily became both self-sustained and self-governed. These were composed of members whose experience in church affairs was small, and whose views of ecclesiastical discipline were necessarily limited and imperfect. It is no wonder that trials came."[1] There was too large an increase of travelling preachers; unsuitable persons were introduced into the ministry; turbulent people from other religious societies made it a Cave of Adullam. Moreover, the period was one of prolonged commercial distress.

The Primitive, like the original Methodists, felt the necessity for laying down rules. Methodism cannot exist without statute law. In 1813 a committee attempted the difficult task, and then deferred it to another opportunity. From quarter to quarter the business had to be shifted, until in January, 1814, the code reached completion; and an order was issued that it should be printed immediately. It stands on old Wesleyan lines, and has its classes, circuits, districts, and conference; but the conference differs from the Wesleyan in this respect, that it consists of delegates from all the districts in the proportion of two laymen to one minister. Hoping to steer clear of old rocks, the Primitives, instead of making the supreme authority clerical, threw a preponderating power into lay hands, and made the rulers they appointed absolute in their decisions. "The Con-

[1] Petty's *Primitive Methodist Connexion*, p. 251.

ference is the highest court in the Connexion," they said, "from whose decisions there is no appeal." Hence the congregations became no more independent than those of the Wesleyans.

The energy put forth by this new society was wonderful. The preachers were humble, the people were of the labouring class; yet in a few years they swept over England and penetrated every corner. Wherever they could find an open place, there, like mediæval friars, they planted pulpits, much to the chagrin of regular clergymen. Indeed, to speak of pulpits is a figure of speech; frequently they had no other rostrum than a wagon or a cart, a chair or a heap of stones. Driven from one place they escaped to another, singing as they went, with indomitable confidence and unquenchable hope. They built chapels, certainly not of an artistic description. The first building of "considerable dimensions" was a tabernacle put up by Mr. Bourne, near which he pitched three tents, after the fashion of the American camps. Some curious incidents in their proceedings are related by their historian. The preachers got into trouble at Grantham, in Lincolnshire. The case came before the quarter sessions. The magistrates opposed them, but the accused had the best of it. Sir William Manners took the preachers' part, and ordered a stone pulpit to be erected within his own grounds, close to the market-place. They wanted a chapel at Leicester, bought a piece of ground and began to build. Visiting neighbouring brickyards, for every thousand bricks they bought, they begged a thousand more. An eccentric gentleman whom they

asked for a donation said, "I will give you a large ash tree, that is cut down and lies on my estate, on condition you will draw it to Leicester with human strength." They accepted the challenge, put the timber on a pair of wheels, and dragged it in front of the donor's house. There a preacher, climbing to the top of the prize they had won, delivered a sermon from the words, "Now also the axe is laid to the root of the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." They removed the trunk into the town and sold it for seven pounds, with which they bought windows for their building.

Clowes visited the city of York, and was puzzled to determine whether he ought to seek from the Lord Mayor permission for preaching, or proceed at once on his own responsibility. He adopted the latter course, and stood on a piece of pavement near the market-place, where he told the people he would come and see them again in a fortnight. The next time he had above a thousand hearers.

The persecution these people met with was disgraceful. It resembled that endured by Wesley's early followers; but in both cases the incidents, when turned into church traditions, had an inspiring power, like the effect of John Foxe's pages on Protestant readers.

A good man preached in a village near Coventry. The parishioners, encouraged by the clergyman, surrounded the house where he was, broke the windows, and drove him away, pelted with rotten eggs. The rabble knocked him down, and threatened, with

oaths, to take his life. As they were hurrying him to a pond somebody interposed and rescued the victim. Another missionary, engaged in Berkshire, says in his journal so late as 1829, "The prospect was very dark; persecution prevailed mightily. I had never before known such violent persecution. The farmers in general were much opposed to Dissenters, and particularly to our community; and they threatened to turn the people out of work, and out of their houses, if they either went to hear us preach or entertained us. We had, therefore, to preach out of doors in many places, and had frequently to suffer the lack of food and lodgings. Some of our preachers had to wander on the downs all night after preaching, having nowhere to sleep." I can so far corroborate this account as to say that I well remember, just after that time, when I was a resident in the county of Berks, hearing of indignities and cruelties recently inflicted on village preachers.

Mobs would ring sheep-bells, beat tin cans, blow horns, shoot and yell, to drown the missionary's voice; but, beyond all this, a magistrate told one of the preachers that unless he promised to desist he should be fined for having sold a few magazines without a hawker's licence. The missionary would neither make the promise nor pay the fine. He was taken to gaol, and set to work at the tread-wheel till his hands blistered and bled. Released through the interposition of gentlemen in the neighbourhood, he was met at the gaol gates by his fellow-religionists, who after singing a hymn in the market-place listened to a sermon he preached from the words,

"Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage."

Methodist chapels of all kinds during the first thirty years of this century were very different from what they are now. No attempts were made at copying Gothic or Palladian styles. No towers or spires, no colonnades or porches. The materials were generally brick, white or red according to the neighbourhood, and the form they took was an ugly square or an awkward parallelogram. The exterior did not invite you to enter, and the interior did not invite you to remain. The high-pitched galleries and the tall pulpit distressed the preacher, and the narrow, straight-backed pews distressed the hearer; worse still were the long benches without any backs at all. It was not meanness that led to this, but poverty, or what came near it; for covetousness is not the besetting sin of any Methodist section of Christendom. The surroundings were as humble as the centres. No schoolrooms, no lecture halls, no vestries were then known. The preacher's house, if not over a rude gateway, as happened in Wesley's time, was in many cases a tiny cottage; and the income was so small that it scarcely kept the wolf from the door. No class of men could be more self-denying than early Methodist preachers. Much good was done by the poorest of these workmen, with the meanest of these appliances. They had crowded congregations; they gathered hearty Christians round the Lord's table; they met in class and related their experience; they sat down at love-feasts and one after another told the story of a lifetime; they assembled on a watch-night

and in silence saw the old year out and the new year in. They had their openings, their anniversaries, their school sermons, their collections—all of which gave pleasure; Wesley's hymns they sang, if not with a melody of voice, yet with a harmony of souls.

The Primitives were chiefly working people—in the towns employed at the mill, in the collieries, at the mines, in agricultural districts at the plough—and their religion was their chief joy, causing them to sing at their work, whatever that work might be. The New Connexion and the Wesleyans might just touch the upper strata of society; and where this was the case demands on the purse were heavy, and converts found that Methodism was no cheap religion. But the people were inexpensive in their habits. The style of living, amongst those who were not crippled for means, was simple in the extreme. Those who only know what Methodist society is now, can have no conception of what it was sixty years since. Neatness and order were the rule, but no extravagance, no waste. Dress was Quakerlike; public amusements were eschewed. Evening companies spent their time in singing hymns and in religious talk; and there was a flavour of piety in their social and domestic life which those personally acquainted with their history remember with interest and pleasure.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

1800–1830.

THERE remained in England another denomination, differing widely from those I have described. Its history runs back to the Commonwealth, and its founder, George Fox, as everybody knows, is a conspicuous figure in the annals of our country.

At the commencement of the present century Quakerism had far more numerous adherents than it has now; and it continued to maintain those peaceful and unworldly habits which were inculcated by the teachings and lives of its early professors. Amongst its permanent characteristics there is one often overlooked, and that is the profound spirit of religious reverence which marks their public worship and their social intercourse. The furthest removed of any community from rites and ceremonies—considered by many as essential to reverence,—they are really conspicuous amongst English religionists for profound homage to the infinitely glorious Creator, and a tender regard for what is truly spiritual.

The current of their history ran on for many years almost without a ripple, deep and pure as their own

character. Silent meetings on first days were occasions of devout enjoyment, and some who looked in and watched, went away and wondered that they heard no voice—as he of old, who curiously pryed into the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem, was astonished that he saw no image there. We know how a man of genius —but no Quaker—was affected by his visits to Quaker meetings: "Wouldst thou know what true peace and quiet mean; wouldst thou enjoy at once solitude and society; wouldst thou possess the depth of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; wouldst thou be solitary yet not desolate, singular yet not without some to keep thee in countenance, come with me into a Quakers' meeting. This is the loneliness to be felt; the Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' meeting."[1] I quote Charles Lamb's words simply to show the *actual* impression made, some sixty or seventy years ago, upon a man who set his mark upon our national literature. It is a significant fact, and whatever may be thought of the poetical side of Lamb's sentiment, it is worth noticing what he says of the effect of silent worship on others: "I have seen faces in their assemblies upon which the Dove sat visibly brooding; others, again, I have watched when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of

[1] *Elia*, by Charles Lamb. "A Quakers' meeting,"—abridged.

fierce controversial workings." First-day meetings were not its only services. Men in broad-brimmed hats and women in black silk bonnets might be seen on Thursday mornings going to the house of God, as doves flock to their windows. They had monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, and annual meetings. Quakers were in their way as orderly, and as jealous of breaking rules, as were the Methodists. A yearly epistle was despatched to all parts of the country, and it generally conveyed some godly lesson worthy of being pondered in this world of noise and strife.

It is a mistake to suppose that any Quaker was at liberty to become what is called a "public Friend," (*i.e.*) an acknowledged preacher of the gospel. His case had to be submitted to a monthly meeting, and sanction given to his ministry by the members present. Labours of a spiritual kind were gratuitously rendered. No salaries were paid, however much time might be devoted to the work, though expenses in travelling were borne by others when the Friend who fulfilled a mission could not defray them himself.

As Friends could not conscientiously enter the army, to be drawn for the militia was a serious matter; but relief was afforded in such cases by the law dispensing with personal service. Deputy-lieutenants were empowered "to provide a substitute for any Quaker balloted under the Act," at a fixed charge of twenty pounds, and to levy such sum on the person's property.[1]

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[1] There is a *Digest of Legislative Enactments relating to the Society of Friends*, by Joseph Davis.

The visitation of members, and of those who had once been members but had, to use the conventional phrase, "married out of Society," was carefully kept up.

There was much energy and zeal manifested by old Friends in the North. William Tuke, Thomas Priestman, George Sanders, and Henry Storrs were household names in Quaker homes, and gladly were their visits welcomed as they went their rounds on "religious service."

There was, however, a consciousness of decline in the general Society. A young minister, in 1806, speaks of "some who lately stood forward nobly and faithfully for the testimonies of truth removed to their everlasting rest, and some of those who now stand as faithful standard-bearers drooping under advanced age; and but few of the dear visited young people coming forward to supply the places of those who are removed and removing from this state of action."[1] Yet again in the next year he says—and it shows how differently an earnest man feels at different times, and under different circumstances, reflecting in his face shadow or sunshine:—"In most places I have found some religiously disposed persons in whom the good seed has not only been well sown, but I trust has taken deep root. I may be mistaken in my feelings, but if I am not mistaken, true spiritual religion is on the increase in many parts of the country, and I think it may be said that in some places the fields are white unto harvest. There is not

[1] *Memoirs of W. Forster*, vol. i. p. 48.

only considerable willingness to attend such meetings as are appointed, but many hearts are opened for the reception of such communications as have been offered, and the meetings are often crowned at the conclusion with such a solemnity as has left a pleasant impression upon my mind."[1]

As early as 1813, signs of disaffection to old principles appeared in Ireland. A touch of freethought was felt by some who occupied prominent positions. Not absolutely setting aside the authority of Scripture, they exalted their own reasonings, so it was suspected, above the testimony of inspiration; and retaining a high estimate of the inward light, they went great lengths in rejecting fundamental gospel truths.[2] They held theories of the Deity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement of Christ, apart from the facts of Christianity, so that the doctrine of the inner light became to them an *ignis fatuus*. The main body of Irish Friends remained loyally attached to their first principles, and dealt faithfully with disaffected members. Some quietly withdrew from fellowship.

A wider divergence of opinion, and a more serious rupture followed in "the Hicksite heresy," as it is called, originating in America with a person named Elias Hicks. He openly rejected the essential truths of Christianity, but maintained the minor peculiarities of Quakerism. An intelligent writer,[3] who understands

[1] *Memoirs of W. Forster*, vol. i. p. 60.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 148.

[3] Mr. Seebohm in his *Life of Forster*. See also his *Life of Stephen Grellet*, vol. ii. p. 177.

the subject, has told us, that among the adherents of the American teacher were many who were not "aware of the vital nature of the points at issue," and did not adopt his extreme views. Without a conscious departure from the faith of their fathers, they, by an act of separation, identified themselves with a party whose pernicious influence they did not perceive. It was in 1825 that these alarming opinions appeared on the other side of the Atlantic, and in 1829 we find them creating anxiety among Quakers in this country. At a yearly meeting at that time an elaborate Declaration of Faith on the Inspiration of Scripture, the Mediation and Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, His perpetual power and dominion in the Church, was unanimously adopted; and fellowship was denied to those who did not accept these truths, or openly accredited ministers who attempted to invalidate them. The declaration was prefaced by these words—"This meeting has been introduced into a feeling of much sympathy and brotherly love for our brethren on the American continent. We have heard with deep concern and sorrow of the close trials to which they have been subjected by the diffusion of antichristian doctrines among them, and we consider it to be a duty to disclaim, and we hereby do disclaim, all connection as a religious society with any meetings for the purpose of worship or discipline, which have been established or which are upheld by those who have embraced such antichristian doctrines."

Properly to understand Quakerism, critics must study the characters of Quakers.

Stephen Grellet was son of a French noble, the intimate friend and counsellor of Louis XVI. He fled for his life at the outbreak of the Great Revolution, and after wandering about, he settled in America, where, with an imperfect knowledge of English, he read Penn's *No Cross, no Crown*, and afterwards became a Friend and a minister of the gospel.

In London his work was wonderful. He won a wide popularity in 1811, and wherever he went he had crowded houses. He records how at Birmingham "a Divine solemnity was spread over the multitude. The Spirit gave strength and qualification to proclaim what the Christian religion is." "His field of labour was in every circle. He was found urging the sons and daughters of Quakers to lead lives of sympathy with Christ and men: he attended meetings of the nobility which were specially called for his engagements—he met Jews in Devonshire House, Houndsditch; and the thieves, pickpockets, and abandoned women, were gathered into the Friends' Meeting-house in St. Martin's Lane."[1] At Newgate he had interviews with the prisoners, and the impression he produced was very remarkable. To England, however, he came only as a visitor; the United States he chose for his home, and there as a preacher, an abolitionist, and a universal philanthropist, he did a work worthy of everlasting remembrance. His life was full of incident. He visited the North of Europe, spent six months in Russia, saw Turkey and Greece, and went

[1] See *Life of Stephen Grellet*, by Seebohm, in two volumes, and a small book on the same subject by the Rev. W. Guest.

down to Southern Italy—all in religious service. He had interviews with the highest dignitaries in Church and State.

As early as 1808, this keen-sighted observer had discovered doctrinal aberrations in Elias Hicks. "His assertions were so often covered," says Stephen Grellet, "that few understood him fully. He promised that he would be more guarded, but vain promises they were, and several times I felt constrained publicly to disavow the unchristian doctrine that he advanced. At a public meeting in this city [New York] after he had advanced his sentiments, I felt it my place in that meeting to open and explain the subject, how as a religious society we had uniformly received and maintained the fundamental Christian truths in harmony with clear Scripture doctrine."[1]

Though a Frenchman, Grellet might, from his long residence in the States, be regarded as an American Friend, and others besides him, from the other side the Atlantic, visited this country on religious service.

William Forster, father of the Right Honourable W. E. Forster, after a short period spent in business, devoted his life to the public ministry, and for this purpose was almost always engaged in home or foreign travel. He gave up a lucrative business that he might follow the ministry. In short, he counted all things but loss that he might win Christ.[2] No missionary,

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[1] *Memoirs of Stephen Grellet*, vol. i. p. 125.

[2] "How truly and exactly," says his brother-in-law, Sir Fowell Buxton, "do the words, 'they left all and followed Him,' convey my view of William's two years' absence from a home, a wife, a boy—the very darlings of his heart, all his wishes and desires

acting as agent for any of our Societies, could be more indefatigable in the discharge of duty than this unpaid labourer in the service of Christian truth and love. His *Memoirs*, which range over both hemispheres, unveil in modest form and in characteristic phraseology some beautiful phases of inner spiritual life, reminding me of the Journals of Fox and Penn, only free from peculiarities which, in the case of those compositions, are repulsive to modern readers. William Forster was a man of large intelligence, a good divine, and not without literary taste; what he wrote is pleasant to read, always leaving the impression that, like Enoch, "he walked with God;" indeed I do not know a more fitting description of his life and ways than what we find in these ancient words. Nothing can better illustrate his own character, and that of Quakerism than such extracts as the following from his Journal.

"1805, 9*th mo.*, 20*th*, *Brighton.*

"I was enabled to cast my burden on my friends at our monthly meeting, and was, I trust, favoured to feel the unity of their spirits in the exercising prospect. I set off on the 7th instant, and think I have cause to acknowledge the goodness and mercy of the Lord in the preservation I have experienced both inwardly and outwardly. Oh, may all that is living within me bow in humble prostration before Him; thank Him for His past unmerited mercies, and make a fresh dedication of my all to His service. The quarterly meeting at Poole was a time that I trust will be remembered

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centring in this spot [Bradpole, Dorset]. I went to meeting with him twice to-day. His morning sermon was one of the best I ever heard."—*Memoirs of Sir T. F. Buxton*, c. vii.

by many. I humbly trust the Master was glorified, and His noble cause of truth exalted. My mind was introduced into deep exercise, under an apprehension that it would be right for me to request an opportunity with such young friends as might be in town that evening. I informed the quarterly meeting for discipline of my prospect, who united in the proposal, and a meeting was accordingly appointed. It was larger than I expected. It was grateful to feel the extension of the heavenly wing; and that the Great Shepherd was stretching out the arms of His love with this merciful design, that all should be gathered into His fold of rest and peace; and that the standard of truth was exalted and the people invited to repair unto it. After this meeting I felt very low, and as if I had done nothing for the cause, and almost ready to conclude the meeting had been held in vain." [1]

Mr. Forster visited, not only many parts of this country in his gospel ministry, but he proceeded to Wales, to Scotland, and the Western Isles. When Stephen Grellet was in England, William Forster became intimate with him, and took an active share in efforts for the benefit of the Metropolis. Together in 1812 they laboured among distressed Spitalfield weavers, inmates of workhouses, impoverished Jews, companies of prostitutes and thieves, and prisoners in gaol. The scenes witnessed on the women's side of Newgate, we are told, were so appalling that immediate steps were taken to enlist the efforts of ladies on behalf of the outcasts; and it was in this way that Elizabeth Fry entered upon "those persevering exertions for the moral and spiritual reformation, and the

[1] *Memoirs of W. Forster*, vol. i. p. 45.

more humane treatment of prisoners, [illegible] deservedly placed her name among their [illegible] benefactors."

Elizabeth Fry was one of the Gurney family, descended from a race of strict Quakers well known in the city of Norwich for a hundred years. At the commencement of this century the younger members, though not renouncing Quakerism, departed from many of its strict habits, and indulged in a good deal of worldly conformity. Being affluent, residing in a mansion called Earlham Hall, and being on visiting terms with the aristocracy, they mixed in fashionable society, entertained persons of distinction, and received as a guest to their pleasantly situated abode a member of the Royal family. Elizabeth Gurney, in her youth, was rather sceptical, but a visit from an American Quaker, William Savery, produced in the lady a great spiritual change. She became a plain Friend, and in 1800 was married to Mr. Fry, a member of the society. Removing to London, she, in the year 1810, became a preacher, being accepted according to the rules of the denomination. She was a remarkably handsome woman, with a countenance of sweet expression set off advantageously by the pure white of her Quaker cap; her tall figure, majestic and graceful, added to her features, produced a commanding effect on those who approached her; her musical voice completing the charm of her presence and conversation. She surpassed her female contemporaries in the gracious power and persuasiveness of her preaching; and what contributed to her usefulness in this respect, contributed largely to her success in paths of benevolence.

She visited Newgate, where she found herself surrounded by hundreds of her sex, sunk in the depths of crime and degradation. To win their hearts was the difficulty. At first repulsed, she soon found that an appeal to motherly instincts would be the best key to their confidence, and, applying this instrument, she soon unlocked their affection, and made herself mistress of those whom gaolers and warders had found utterly unmanageable. Pursuing her task, for awhile unhelped, she in 1817 established a Ladies' Committee for the reformation of female prisoners, the sheriffs giving permission to their prison visits, but rendering no official assistance. Her work grew on her hands, and looking beyond Newgate, she sought to improve the prison discipline of the country in general, and devoted herself to the same cause as that which called forth the energies of John Howard. Ministers of state and clergy of different denominations sympathised in her purposes, and co-operated in her plans; and by degrees this illustrious personage accomplished an enterprise which has immortalized her name.

Whilst Mrs. Fry was walking the prisons, and preaching the gospel, another member of the society devoted himself to the subject of education. This was Joseph Lancaster, son of a soldier in the Foot-Guards, born in the Borough Road, Southwark, with which his name was destined to be associated for a long time to come. He obtained a room, and fitted it up at his own expense, before he was nineteen years of age, and there gathered together ninety neglected children that swarmed in the neighbourhood. He attracted the notice of the Duke of Bedford and of George the

Third, who in the spirit of Alfred the Great said to him, "I wish that every poor child in my dominions may be able to read his Bible." That little sentence went from lip to lip, and circulated throughout the kingdom, inspiring a zeal in the cause of popular instruction unknown before. From 1807 to 1811, Lancaster travelled, and lectured, and unfolded his plans to the British public. They consisted chiefly in arrangements for monitorial instruction, the elder boys and girls being employed to instruct the younger in elementary knowledge.

It will be remembered that Dr. Bell adopted the monitorial system, and it has been maintained that Lancaster borrowed the system from him. Into that controversy it is unnecessary to enter here. At any rate Lancester did much to extend education, but as he was a Nonconformist, Church people looked upon him with much suspicion. Elementary instruction had been sadly neglected, the clergy had, in numerous instances, been of opinion that it would unfit the lower classes for their position in life, and inspire them with feelings of independence unfavourable to obedience in matters touching politics, also in matters touching religion. Popular instruction was looked upon as a dissenting scheme for kidnapping children from the Established Church.

Lancaster's co-religionists threw themselves heartily into the enterprise in 1808, and established the British and Foreign School Society. They based their work on catholic principles, and prohibited the use of all denominational catechisms. Lancaster himself, after labouring in his own country, emigrated to America,

and there carried on his educational efforts. They were extended to Canada, where he was aided by the Colonial Parliament; but his latter days were embittered by controversy and pecuniary troubles. Prudence does not seem to have been one of his endowments.

The Society of Friends included at least two well known worthies of science.

John Dalton was son of a Cumberland Dalesman, who brought him up in Quaker ways, and sent him to school with a Friend named Fletcher, who gathered together the children of his community in that district. The boy got on so well that he actually opened a school of his own when he was only twelve years old. Afterwards, being fond of mathematics, he set up as a teacher at Kendal, then a centre of Quakerism in the Lake Country. Afterwards he went to reside in Manchester, and for years dwelt among his own people in Quaker garb, with Quaker speech, and was a regular attendant on Thursday meetings. At the same time he carried on scientific inquiries which ended in the discovery of chemical combinations such as revolutionized his chosen branch of science. On them he based his atomic theory, which to the chemists of Europe, Dr. Whewell says, "was like a lighted torch passed round amongst lamps trimmed and filled with oil and ready to be kindled." He had at an early period studied the phenomena of dew, and it is pleasant to think of him as a devout man, who meditated on that omnipotent goodness which "weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," and who maketh "the dew to lie all night upon the

branch." The Royal Society awarded to him a gold medal, and at Oxford he was made a D.C.L. He was born in 1766, and died in 1844.

William Allen is another Quaker celebrity of that age. Born in 1770, he died in 1843. The two good men ran their race side by side, nearly from beginning to end; and if Allen was no great original discoverer, he exceeded his contemporary in practical efforts for the good of his countrymen. He was a chemist, a lecturer at Guy's Hospital, a fellow of the Royal Society, and a contributor of an important paper to the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1829, demonstrating that the diamond is carbon; but beyond that he devoted himself to schemes of public usefulness, improving the cottages of the poor, providing workshops and playgrounds for the young, and performing long and arduous journeys as a preacher of the gospel.

The Society of Friends is not without what may be called interior organization for managing affairs, providing for the poor and educating the children of humbler members; but they have had no public institutions appealing to the country like other branches of English Christendom. Yet they have been zealous supporters of catholic plans, and this is a fact too interesting to be passed by. It distinguishes modern Friends from ancient ones. I question whether George Fox and William Penn would have joined John Owen and Richard Baxter in endeavouring to circulate the Bible all over the world, and educate children of homeborn artisans and peasants. Nor am I at all sure, that if they had, those Puritan worthies would have reciprocated their willingness. But Quakers were

from the beginning staunch friends of the British and Foreign Bible Society; and a brother of William Forster was one of the most regular attendants on Committee business at Earl Street. As to the British and Foreign School Society, founded in 1808, William Allen, Joseph Fox, and other Friends were amongst its most strenuous advocates.

Quaker home life retained much of its original simplicity. The rich mingled with the poor; they realized to a large extent the common brotherhood of humanity, and the spiritual equality of members in their communion. It is related respecting Yorkshire, that such was the republican equality in the community,—increased no doubt by the natural independence which characterizes the West Riding,—that a small Quaker farmer or shopkeeper in Bradford felt himself upon a footing with the Quaker aristocracy of the town. A handloom weaver had become a Quaker preacher, and simply because he was a sterling character, often received invitations to dine at a Quaker mansion in the neighbourhood; but he had conscientious scruples against the vanity of a carriage and pair, and would never ride to his host's domain. The freemasonry of Friends, united to local habits, produced this pleasant fusion of different classes; and another illustration may be gathered from the same place. "It was a custom amongst the Society of Friends to appoint at certain times a deputation of its members to wait upon the other members of the community, to ascertain whether they were keeping their worldly affairs in proper order. On one of these occasions a deputation called on an influential Friend,

who entered into minute details, showing that he approved of what others might have regarded as an inquisitorial visit. He told them he had made his will, and showed how he kept different books for each of his estates and businesses, which at the time were both numerous and extensive."[1]

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[1] *Bradford Antiquary*, Part I., pp. 29, 30.

CHAPTER XV.

MORAVIANS.

1800–1830.

MORAVIANISM was instituted and nurtured in England by its founder, Zinzendorf, and after many vicissitudes it retained considerable influence eighty years ago. Bedford, Bristol, Duckinfield, Bath, and Devonport had congregations of the order in 1800; and if they did not increase during the next thirty years, they continued to hold their own. Settlements were established in different places. These were little colonies; "the Brethren" living together a village life, with schools and industrial institutions under the government of their own Church. Fulneck was a good example, being an abode of order and neatness, with a pleasant-looking chapel under episcopal superintendence; altogether resembling, on a small scale, Neuwied on the river Rhine, or Hernhutt in the kingdom of Saxony. The ecclesiastical constitution of Moravianism has from the beginning been peculiar. It has bishops, but the government may be described as of a Presbyterian cast, because Synods, provincial and general, are the ruling powers. A provincial Synod has the direction of provincial affairs, and legislates in detail, according to principles laid down by a general Synod;

it elects an executive Board of Elders to conduct business for the following term. The English provincial Synod consists of ministers in active service, and deputies from congregations, besides bishops and provincial officers. A general Synod overlooks the provinces. The last in Zinzendorf's lifetime was held in the old Chateau of Marienborn, in Wetteravia, not far from Frankfort-on-the-Maine. The body of rulers has sometimes been divided, and has come under the influence of differently minded leaders. In the general Synod of 1801, there were three laymen out of fifty-five voting members, showing a large preponderance of ministerial power. Seventeen years elapsed before another Synod was held, when again only three laymen were present to vote. Changes were made in the ecclesiastical constitution; and two circles of membership were instituted, one for those who were not ready to adopt certain Moravian peculiarities. The lot had been used not only for the election of officers, but also to decide matrimonial engagements. In 1801 it was altogether dropped with reference to election; and with reference to English marriages it was not obligatory after 1818. Another Synod followed in 1825, when the lot was further limited, and the double scheme of membership underwent a reverse. Thus English Moravians, notwithstanding the privilege of holding provincial Synods, were, in matters of the highest importance, subject to Synods held in Germany.[1]

[1] Much interesting information about the modern Brethren will be found in the *Moravian Almanack and Year-Book.*

The Latrobes have long been closely connected with Moravian affairs. Benjamin Henry Latrobe translated Krantz's *History of the Brethren*, and also Spangenberg's *Christian Doctrine*, both standard books with the community. Benjamin Latrobe was a bishop, officiating in Fetter Lane, who died in the early part of this century, and was succeeded by his son, Christian Ignatius Latrobe. James Latrobe became a bishop in 1829; and the whole family have been remarkable for their accomplishments, for depth of piety, and sweetness of temper. The poet Montgomery was a Moravian. His attachment to the "Brethren" appears in his poem on Greenland, in which he sympathetically paints the incidents of their enterprise in that frozen realm, and the heroic spirit displayed by them through long years of toil and disappointment.

As during the last half of the eighteenth, so during the present century, the glory of Moravianism has been found in its Missions. They have been true to their original type, and have maintained their old humility of purpose, their old trust in the providence of God, their old faith in the efficacy of prayer, their old love of peace, and their old privilege of attracting the affection of other communities. Their chosen fields have been of a humble description, not China, not Hindustan, but Greenland, Labrador, the West Indies, South Africa, and the Australian aborigines. Their work has been done by hardy Germans, whose strength of character and economical habits have fitted them for that rough work which others would not touch, but they have heroically undertaken.

Their annals teem with romantic and inspiring facts, and the memory of them served to keep alive in English minds and hearts an interest in their unparalleled achievements. For ninety years the story of a little ship weathering stormy seas while carrying out a cargo of provisions for the Brethren at Labrador, awakened the wonder of English Christians, and strengthened their faith in God's providence and the efficacy of His people's prayers. A new outburst of heroism, worthy of the Greenland pioneers, appeared in 1818, when the Brethren undertook a settlement for Lepers in the African Valley of Hemel en Aarde (Heaven and Earth, so called because hemmed in by rocks with only a strip of sky above). The lepers were like those of Israel, no man caring for them; but, in spite of natural aversion, the missionaries, in their Master's spirit, comforted the outcasts by bringing them to the Saviour.

Missions were extended in successive years. At the beginning of the century, out of a hundred and seventy ministers, one hundred were missionaries, and the membership in Missionary Churches, I believe, now amounts to more than twice as many as in the Churches at home.

An English association was formed in aid of Moravian Missions in 1817. Ministers of different denominations pleaded on their behalf. My principal reason for stating such facts is to show how missionary impulses were created, in English Christendom, by narratives of Moravian self-sacrifice.

The Moravians in England, though never a powerful body, and in some respects a peculiar people,

have been by no means sectarian ; on the contrary, they have ever cherished catholic sympathies, and lived on friendly terms with their co-religionists. This became more and more the case, as other denominations took an increasing interest in their wonderful Missions. Romantic tales of their early days have fanned the flame of missionary ardour in general ; and if the Brethren have been benefited by collections made on behalf of their efforts, what they received has been paid back in fresh incentives to Christian zeal. Seventeen new missionary stations were established during the period covered by this chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

IRVING AND THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

1820–30.

A SINGULAR phenomenon appeared in the religious world when the first quarter of this century ran near its close. A Presbyterian minister, then unknown to fame, came to an obscure place of worship in the metropolis, and took all ranks of society by storm; and this very person, son of a Church the most unritualistic in Christendom, and to which he was strongly attached, became founder of a community which bears a close resemblance to that which has its central seat in Rome.

He produced an excitement which, from the extent to which it prevailed, the class of persons it affected, and the prophetic fervour which it displayed, rose to the importance of a national event. He came from Scotland, where he assisted Dr. Chalmers, but at Glasgow gave no augury of what he was afterwards to accomplish. He felt he had a Divine mission to Babylon the Great, not a common inspiration of zeal, such as moves each true minister, but a special impulse from the Lord on high. Beyond Luther, beyond Knox, he seemed to regard himself as "servant of the Lord," and, with earnestness

unparalleled in modern times, he delivered his burden before the nation of England. He spoke to men at large; to people of fashion in particular. Never since George Whitefield, had any one so arrested attention; and Irving went far beyond Whitefield in attracting the respectful, even the admiring notice, of lords, ladies, and commoners. His name was on every lip; newspapers, magazines, and reviews discussed his merits; and caricatures in shop windows hit off his eccentricities. Mr. Canning made allusion to him in Parliament, quoting with sympathy the beautiful word "*fatherhood*," in reference to God, which, if not coined by the preacher, received from him a mark which gave it a wide currency. It may seem to some, when pondering this beautiful title, that Irving in his preaching dwelt on the loving parentship of the Almighty to all mankind in a tender and sentimental way, after the manner of modern preachers. This was by no means the case. On turning to a course of sermons on God our Father, printed since his death, amongst his collected writings, you find a theological dissertation on the eternal generation of the Son, in acuteness not unworthy of Athanasius, and as for golden eloquence, vying with Chrysostom. He sets forth the Nicene doctrine with orthodox decision, and patiently, paragraph after paragraph, leads his hearers into the deep things of God. That preaching of such an order should have attracted crowds, and kept nobles and ladies spellbound, is a fact which modern critics, despising what is dogmatic, and treating doctrinal teaching as dead and chaff-like, may find it difficult to explain.

Baptism too was a subject on which he largely dwelt, insisting upon its efficacy, much after an Anglo-Catholic manner, and glorying in the Scottish Confession, which says, "We utterly condemn the vanity of those who affirm the sacrament to be nothing but naked and bare signs." In homilies on the Lord's Supper, he also goes far beyond a mere symbolical meaning in the ordinance. Utterly repudiating the tenet of transubstantiation, he holds that there is a real spiritual presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the elements, a presence to be enjoyed only through the faith of the communicant. Some sermons printed in his collected works are admirable and edifying to those who have no sympathy with him in his sacramental views. As to spirit and style, they remind one of Milton's prose. A series on the parable of the sower are especially excellent.

How he appealed in tones like thunder to the irreligious portion of his audience will appear from the following passage taken out of a lecture on John the Baptist:—

"Therefore, now, while the light of heaven gleameth in your eye, and the soul stayeth in her insecure and fragile tabernacle, even now, ere death's finger hath stopped your ear from all hearing of salvation, and your soul from all tender touch of remorse,—now while God lingereth, yea, lingereth at the solicitation of the Vine-dresser, ere He cut you down as cumberers of the ground,—turn even now at the voice of this remonstrance that His Spirit hath sent on purpose to quicken and resuscitate decayed and irresolute souls, —now, now, come confessing your sins, and seeking of

the Holy Ghost what you shall do to inherit eternal life.

"And, ye generation of godless rebels, that refuse and will not come to any terms, however gracious, but hold out in perfect contempt of God, the sands of your life are fast ebbing, and the last particle shall soon fall, and you shall sink speechless into the waste places of spirits reprobate; when desolation's blast shall come over your well-being, as the whirlwind cometh over the deep; and changeless, pitiless, iron-clasped, destiny shall engirdle you for ever."

The place of his ministrations from 1822 to 1829 was the Scottish Church, Hatton Garden, where people flocked long before the hour of service arrived, besieging every entrance, and blocking up a lane which led to the vestry door. There, I remember seeing him, with a child in his arms, come one Sunday morning, as gentle as he was majestic—above six feet, broad shouldered, with a face which, as Walter Scott said, "resembled that of our Saviour in Italian pictures, the hair carefully arranged in the same manner, parted in the middle," flowing in jet black locks over his ample shoulders, and he made way through the concourse as one born to command, "a king amongst men." Ascending the pulpit—rows of Scottish boys sitting in front of it, the church crowded to every corner with people of rank and fashion,—he announced a psalm, "The Lord my shepherd is," reading it with matchless pathos, and then offered up a prayer of no common kind. The substance, the style, the delivery of the discourse—every word of it read—was such as could not be forgotten. "He

was unquestionably, by many degrees," said De Quincey, "the greatest orator of our times." "Bodily and spiritually," declared Carlyle, "perhaps there was not in that November, 1822, a man more full of genial energetic life in all these islands." "His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with; I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever found in this world, or hope to find." His modes of address were original, he laid unusual matter under contribution, so as to provoke Hazlett's satire, "he has held a play-book in one hand, and a Bible in the other, and quoted Shakespeare and Melanchthon in the same breath."

In 1825 he delivered a sermon on the missionary charter which startled everybody. The discourse when published was inscribed to no other than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the author saying, "It will seem wonderful to many, that I should make choice of you, from the circle of my friends, to dedicate to you these beginings of my thoughts upon the most important subject of these or any times." Irving chose for his theme the history of our Lord's sending forth the twelve, without gold or silver, without scrip or purse, without shoes or staves, and he held up the twelve as an example for missionaries. In his preface, he acknowledged the doctrine to be of "so novel and unpalatable a character, that if it was to do any good, or even to live, it must be brought before the public with a more minute investigation of the Scriptures, and fuller development of reason, than could be contained within the compass of a single discourse." This homily covers a hundred closely printed pages,

and as delivered it occupied, I believe, about three hours. The effect can be better imagined than described. He seemed going back to the days of Francis of Assisi—interpreting Scripture as the Italian saint would have done, and seeking to wrap a friar's mantle round a Protestant preacher. He said: "I remember in this metropolis to have heard it uttered with great applause in a public meeting, where the heads and leaders of the religious world were present, 'If I were asked what was the first qualification for a missionary, I would say, Prudence; and what the second? Prudence; and what the third? I would say, Prudence.' Money, money, money, is the universal cry. Mammon hath gotten the victory, and may triumphantly say (nay, he may keep silence, and the servants of Christ will say it for him), Without me ye can do nothing." Irving threw prudence to the winds, and cared not a straw for money; with wild aberrations of genius he had something of the old Hebrew prophet. He did a courageous deed that night, but most of his hearers looked on him as mad. I distinctly remember deliverances to that effect uttered by some who were distinguished amongst Evangelical ministers, as leaders of opinion and main pillars of our religious societies.

Multitudes still crowded to hear him, and it was necessary to build a new Scotch church. The edifice in Regent's Square was opened by Dr. Chalmers in 1829, when the preacher drew an enormous congregation, and statesmen sat at his feet under the inspiration of his eloquence. But a change was

coming over the spirit of Irving's dream even then, for in 1825 he began preaching on the second advent, in his own style. Then he published a translation of Ben Ezra's *Coming of the Messiah in Majesty*, and afterwards speculated on the incarnation of our Lord, and the moral character of His humanity. These speculations, though conceived by their author with the utmost reverence, shocked his friends, who detected a taint of terrible heresy. His preaching began to fall off—he extemporized ; spoke at random ; took to street preaching ; would stand under the wall of Clerkenwell prison to address a few bystanders ; and, to crown all, encouraged "manifestations," as they were called in the west of Scotland. They originated on the banks of the Clyde amongst some pious Presbyterians, who believed that the miraculous gifts of the primitive Church were being renewed. They were repeated in London at the Scotch Church, Regent's Square, in 1831.

It was a cold dark winter's morning, when, with some fellow students, I walked down to the church at seven o'clock. The vast building was dimly lighted ; people were scattered in the pews waiting for the "manifestation" ; when Irving, like a weird ghost, emerged from the dark shades behind the communion table. At length a dead silence was broken by unearthly shrieks. Then followed what seemed like articulate sounds, but perfectly unintelligible. These were "the tongues," so called. They were repeated and repeated ; when loud screams were heard in English, "He is coming," "He is coming," "He is coming." After this, as if exhausted by such utterances, the

speaker seemed to sink on the floor. These "manifestations" have been very differently described by Irving himself. "There is," he says, "a power in the voice to thrill the heart and overawe the spirit after a manner that I have never felt. There is a march, and a majesty, and a sustained grandeur in the voice, especially of those who prophesy, which I have never heard even a resemblance to, except now and then in the sublimest and most impassioned moods of Mrs. Siddons and Miss O'Neill. It is a mere abandonment of all truth to call it screaming or crying. It is the most majestic and divine utterance which I have ever heard: some parts of which I never heard equalled, and no part of it surpassed by the finest execution of genius and art exhibited at the oratorios in the concerts of ancient music. And when the speech utters itself in the way of a psalm or spiritual song, it is the likest to some of the most simple and ancient chants in the cathedral services, insomuch that I have been often led to think that those chants, of which some can be traced up as high as the days of Ambrose, are recollections and transmissions of the inspired utterances in the primitive Church." So much for what imagination can do. We are reminded by it of another manifestation, described in the life of that strange person Blake, both artist and poet, the author of *Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, who died in 1828. This singular man anticipated, it would seem, the phenomena of modern spiritualism; for he speaks of "a sublime allegory, which is now perfectly completed into a great poem. I may praise

it, since I dare not attempt to be other than the secretary; the authors are in eternity. I consider it the grandest poem this world contains." "There is no tangible medium of communication mentioned in Blake's descriptions; but the disciples of this faith write as he did, utterances of which they do not claim to be more than the secretary, and of which they sometimes assert that they are great poems." [1]

But there were other marvels of a different kind connected with Irving's career. The voices were deemed by him and his disciples supernatural; and other supernatural signs and wonders were claimed to have been wrought through his or their instrumentality. We heard much of the healing of diseases in immediate answer to prayer. Irving, it was said, brought down by his believing intercessions health and strength upon a young lady whom the physicians had given up. Whatever explanation might be given of certain cases of recovery, there was no lack of evidence that the cures were quite out of the common way, and that the only apparent means which led to the result was the prayer of faith.

The man who made such a stir was as gentle in private life as he was stern in public work. I once paid him a visit. He was sitting by the hearthside, rather unwell, wrapped in a large blue cloak, his eyes, notwithstanding an obliquity of vision, shining like live coals, and penetrating one's soul with a feeling of reverence. He was the same out of the pulpit as

[1] *The Literary History of the Nineteenth Century*, by Mrs. Oliphant, vol. ii. p. 293.

in it, not given to small talk, but discoursing on high themes. On this occasion his subject was the sacrament of baptism, to which he attached a high importance. He spoke like an old prophet, and at the close of his conversation he slowly rose from his chair, till his head seemed as if it would touch the ceiling, when, waving to a nursemaid in the room to hush a child, he lifted one hand to heaven, and then placed the other hand on my head, and offered an intercession which I shall never forget as long as I live.

Besides the uncommon proceedings I have described, there were doctrinal peculiarities connected with his history. He believed in the perfection of our Lord's Divinity, and in the actual spotlessness of His human life, but he attributed the latter to the Saviour's will, not to any physical necessity. He held that Christ was in a certain sense peccable, though entirely pure; in other words, that He *could* have sinned, though He never did. The distinction might be overlooked, and consequences shocking to Christian sensibilities were plausibly but unfairly deduced from this subtle intrusion into a region of conceived possibility. According to his view the temptations of our Lord were as *real* as ours, which he thought they could not have been if the common orthodox view of our Lord's humanity be the true one. This was considered to be heretical; it brought him under the discipline of his own Presbytery, and he was put on trial in the Church at London Wall, where he defended himself after his own characteristic manner. It was in 1830; and after being condemned on that

occasion he appealed to a general Synod; but the Synod would not stand by him, and he was condemned and excommunicated from the Church of his fathers. The excommunication occurred in 1833, and on his return to London he officiated as angel in a London congregation of the Catholic Apostolic Church.

He returned to Scotland in 1834, with the vain hope of being a prophet for the conversion of his fellow-countrymen; but he fell into consumption, and was not spared to do the work he contemplated. To the last, delusions as to his national mission continued; but it was no delusion when this man of wayward genius in his last moments exclaimed, "In life and in death I am the Lord's."

The causes which gradually diminished, and then totally extinguished, Irving's popularity are very obvious. Though essentially evangelical, he never pursued those lines of thought which are common amongst those who bear that name. He dwelt much upon the catholic doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the office of Christ's Church as a witness to the world—an office of which he had a high conception. What is called the "religious world"—an unfortunate expression, though in some cases a correct title—he looked upon with no complacency whatever, and treated it as the old Hebrew prophets treated a like condition of society in their day. He was bent upon bringing to light its evils, and when he had done so he unmercifully condemned them. This of course brought down upon him the severe censure of some portions of the religious press. His rebukes

of other men naturally aroused counter rebukes. His eccentricities added to the social alienation he had in other ways created. His prophetical speculations drove away many from his ministry. The doctrinal heresies of which he was accused, beyond all previous things, damaged his reputation; and then the tongues and other "miraculous gifts" put out the last lights of his brilliant fame. The "religious public," after making him an idol, pulled him from his pedestal and cast him down into the dust.

Into Irving's mind there entered not only a metaphysical notion of peccability in the man Christ Jesus, but a practical idea to this effect—that the Church ought to be brought back to its primitive estate; and as miraculous gifts were originally connected with ministerial orders, so by the revival of those orders, and by strong faith in the power and presence of the Holy Ghost, supernatural gifts long lost might be recovered. Accordingly Irving gathered a congregation in Newman Street, London, under a government composed of apostles, angels, prophets, evangelists, and elders. The seeds of this development were sown in those sacramental ideas he early conceived. Such ideas seek embodiment in a priesthood possessing Divine powers, and such powers seek expression in an elaborated order of ministers with corresponding forms of ritual.

The Lord's Supper, interpreted as a sacrifice of our Lord's whole human nature, was connected with commemorations of the dead, and in the rites and ceremonies and vestments employed there was a typical significance—purple robes indicating apostolic

dignity, blue the gift of prophecy, crimson the shedding of Christ's blood, and white the pure relation between pastor and flock. "The Catholic Apostolic Church," so it was called, laid great stress on the Ecumenical Creeds of Christendom, and also embraced the doctrine of the Lord's second coming at the commencement of the Millennium.

One of the members has made this statement:— "The forms of worship are those which have been used in all ages in the Catholic Church. The first and last hours of every day are devoted to Divine service—the matins and vespers of our fathers. Prayers are made also at nine and three o'clock. The Holy Eucharist is offered and the Communion administered every Lord's-day. The form of the buildings, the furniture of the same, the vestments of the clergy, are, in like manner, those that were devoted to the worship of God in catholic times. Liturgies appropriate to each service, as they were of old, cleansed from the mixture of idolatrous invocations of dead men and women, are employed. All these practices are still used in the greater part of Christendom, but they are become mere mummeries, because the true significance of them is forgotten and unknown. Authority for regulating church affairs is vested in a Council, and that Council, formed 'by the word of prophecy,' has its foreshadowing type in the tabernacle in the wilderness." But the foreshadowing is clumsily explained. There were forty-eight boards in the Mosaic structure, and with these correspond the aggregate of six elders from each of the seven London churches, together with six apostles. There

were five bars upholding the boards; with these correspond five of the apostles who are prime counsellors in the authoritative ministry. Two tenons with their silver sockets find their antitypes in the diaconal officers. Two corner boards represent two elders. The four pillars of the holy place point to four head officers—apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor. Five pillars at the entrance are emblems of five evangelists; the seven-branched candlestick symbolized the seven angels of the Church. Sixty pillars of the court were sixty evangelists: and an assembly of this kind presided over by a complete apostolate of twelve would be infallible.

The fourfold ministry of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor, mainly distinguished this peculiar body of religionists. The apostle took precedence of the rest—conferring the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, communicating to the Church mysteries revealed to him, and deciding matters of discipline and order. The prophet was divinely commissioned to explain prophecy, to open scripture, to decipher symbols. The evangelist was a herald to proclaim gospel tidings to the outside world. The pastor was to fold the flock, to watch over the sheep. Deacons were to manage temporal matters, and the payment of tithes or tenths of property was the source of Church revenue.

The system was a reaction against the cold hard dogma, that immediate spiritual influences were not to be any longer looked for; that after the Day of Pentecost, when apostles had left the world, heaven's door was shut, and the ladder between the upper and

under world was quite withdrawn. But, instead of taking the shape of individual illumination and sanctifying power, it took up as main ideas the Church, the ministry, and social worship. The results to be sought were new organizations, new officers, new rites; or, which amounts to the same thing, a revival of early institutes which had been abandoned or corrupted, and the recovery of these through a new revelation of the Spirit. The system was as churchly as the old communions of the West and East, as sacerdotal and as ceremonial as English Ritualism in its most æsthetic forms. But it took neither a Roman nor an Anglican name. It was Catholic Apostolic, aiming at universality and claiming a primitive origin. It had, however, no historical basis. It appealed to a fresh Divine revelation. From common fields of controversy it retired. Reasonings were of no avail, proof texts were useless. The appeal was to supernatural gifts, miraculous voices, signs from heaven.

In 1832, after excitement produced by tongues and prophesying, a number of persons united to organize and develop the Catholic Apostolic Church as revealed to the chosen. Their first meeting-place, and they retained it for some years, was an old studio in Newman Street, belonging to Benjamin West, the artist, and this was transformed into a chapel. "I myself," says a spectator, "have repeatedly in the course of one morning's service witnessed no fewer than from four to seven exhibitions in the way of speaking with tongues."

Seven churches were commenced in London, composed of converts under the ministry of evangelists

and apostles. One took high rank when it became fixed in later years within the walls of a cathedral, built at the south-west corner of Gordon Square. Early English architecture without, rich decoration within, a fine nave, a triforium over the aisle, stained glass windows, a Lady chapel—constituted no mean attractions; Gothic passages and houses with gables and balconies added to the magnificence of the structure.

The most noted member of this community between thirty and forty years ago was Henry Drummond, M.P. He was a man of bold individuality, not caring for any kind of criticism, sometimes amusing the House of Commons by trenchant attacks, not destitute of humour, whilst honesty and courage were indisputably manifested in his zealous adherence to the Catholic Apostolic Church. He thoroughly believed in what he professed. At his seat, Albury Park, already noticed as a gathering place for prophetical students, he built in his grounds a place of worship for the new denomination. The decorations were uncommonly rich, and the chair of the angel or bishop, occupied by Lord Sidmouth, stood on the north side of the chancel. The vestry contained gorgeous robes for use by priestly officers.[1]

Here let us pause awhile.

No one who carefully studies the first thirty years of the present century can regard them as the regular even flow of Time's deep stream; or as a rich hill-girdled lake, into which waters roll to find there a

[1] *A History of Irvingism*, in two vols., was published in 1878.

placid resting-place. The rapids above Niagara are not more tumultuous. The Boden See, fed by the Rhine torrent, is not more productive of further momentous issues. The years are full of change, conflict, force, vying in rapid and mighty influences, the most startling period of this world's annals. They gather into themselves results which can be traced back to distant origins. They are fed by events which arose sometimes in obscure spots, and in almost forgotten ways. At the same time the sum total of the past at that epoch, now outspread before our eyes, cannot be looked at as a final consequence. It is not that in which the foregoing incidents and impulses reached their ultimate aim and end. We are confident, without travelling any farther, that the course of things must rush much farther on. This is apparent in what we see of the politics, the civilization, the science, the literature, the commercial enterprise, and the social longings of fifty years ago. So also is it with regard to ecclesiastical affairs. Things could not continue in one stay. It is as plain as plain can be, that whatever striking movements had occurred, others equally and even more striking were at hand. We do not reach an end, we come to a new beginning. The next twenty, thirty, forty years teem with revolutions in the relationship of the Established Church to the State; in ecclesiastical reforms; in the rectification of old abuses; in the commencement of new religious departures; in the institution of unprecedented organizations; in the flow of spiritual zeal and energy over British colonies and heathen lands; in the appearance of forms of theological

thought, which though the elements may be discovered in ancient literature, were being wrought in the past generation into novel combinations which perplex the historian.

In laying down my pen at the close of this first volume, I feel that a still more difficult task is before me in the second. Let me crave the reader's patience and forbearance as he peruses what will follow.

END OF VOL. I.

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